THE

HISTORY

OF

MYSELF AND MY FRIEND,

A NOVEL:

BY

ANNE PLUMPTRE.

1102

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

"Je ne crois pas qu'il existe deux hommes qui aiment de la même manière. Semblable à l'eau, qui prend le goût des terroirs où elle passe et des matériaux qu'on y dépose, l'amour prend une forte teinte de tous les caractères qu'il rencontre; il en est de doux, de languissans, de vifs, d'emportés, d'impétueux, je ne sais s'il n'en est pas d'aigres et d'amers." SOUFREIN.

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OF

MYSELF AND MY FRIEND.

CHAPTER I.

Interesting discussions.—The painter presented with a not very pleasing picture.—Affecting impressions produced by it.—A decision made after long hesitation.

THE same idea which tormented poor Walter at the commencement of his father's illness, that it had been brought on by the conversation which passed between them on the evening when he was first attacked, had never ceased to haunt him; and he was made so wretched by it, that I could not forbear at length, when I thought it might be done without injury to Mr. Armstrong, mentioning the subject. My disclosure was concluded by observing with sensations of the most poignant regret, that if the consequences had been such

as Walter apprehended, the fault was wholly mine, since it was entirely owing to me that the conversation was introduced.

Mr. Armstrong expressed himself as much obliged to me for the communication, since he should certainly never have had any suspicion of his son's entertaining such an idea;—but he could, he added, make him perfectly easy on that account. Then desiring that Walter might be called in;—"My dear children," he said, "there is no occasion, believe me, for either of you to distress yourselves on this account. You, Samuel, judged very rightly, that whatever might be my son's wishes, even though in direct opposition to my own, the knowledge of them could not distress me half so much as the idea of his practising any reserve towards me:—and you, Walter, may be assured that the disclosure you have made gives me much less pain than if you had suffered me, through ignorance of your wishes, involuntarily to oppose them. I had not been perfectly well all day, and was apprehensive that an attack was coming on; I really was much indisposed when the conversation was begun, and was mortified that my increasing sufferings prevented its being continued. I thank the supreme disposer of events,—most sincerely,

most devoutly thank him,—that I am spared to resume the subject.

"I have stated to you, my dear son, some objections to what you propose, which are I think important, but they are not all that may be urged. Your mind is now devoted to this pursuit, and, with all the ardour of inexperienced youth, you flatter yourself that to succeed in it you have only to excel:—alas! in the world the reverse is too often the case, and to excel rather presents an insuperable obstacle to our success, than assists in promoting it. I mean to speak here in a worldly point of view, in measuring our success by the profit which accrues from our labours; and this kind of success is an important consideration when we are to look to our occupation as the means of our support. In every situation from which profit is to be derived, numberless competitors will necessarily arise;—rivalship as necessarily engenders jealousies and ill-will;—and thence spring calumnies and detractions, which have their origin in a determination to undermine the rival with whom the detractor feels he cannot successfully cope in fair and open combat. You now see only the bright side of things: but, my dear son where you look for applause you will perhaps most find censure;—where you look for fame and fortune, you will find

the hand that was stretched out to grasp the laurel and the golden rod round which it is entwined, catch but at an empty shadow, while the substance becomes the prize of some insidious detractor :—you will see art and intrigue carry off what ought to have been the recompense of merit alone. Such is too often the fate of those who enter the lists in such a competition as the profession you would follow inevitably creates. Can you steel your bosom against mortifications like these?—can you repel with indifference the shafts of envy and calumny?—or can you regard with stoical apathy censures which you feel to be undeserved? From such an exercise of your philosophy you must not hope to be exempted;—to such trials you must expect to find your fortitude often subjected.

"Believe me that I have not here drawn an exaggerated picture, or endeavoured to place the matter under the darkest point of view in the hope of deterring you from your purpose; I do but place before your eyes the question as it truly stands, and I should think myself wanting in a parent's duty if I omitted the task, painful as it is to me thus to damp your ardour. I repeat it, that I think the profession a very honourable one, and one which ought to be the certain source of fame and

profit to the professor who has attained to excellence in it;—I think that it might even be made subservient to the noblest purposes;—but of those that seek for fame and profit along this path, there are few indeed who find it.

"Walter, I have no doubt that you have a genius and taste for painting which may lead to excellence, but you must not flatter yourself with the idea that you are at present by any means arrived at it. You have hitherto pursued it only as an amusement, and attempts which may pass tolerably well as those of an unpractised hand, will appear only contemptible if regarded as the efforts of a professor. You must besides consider that the painter's is no idle occupation;—to be pursued with effect, it must be pursued with an assiduity which can admit of no abatement;—natural genius will do much, nothing can be done without it, but 'tis study alone, and severe study, which can perfect and polish that genius;—and remember that you must look to repeated failures in your attempts, before you can expect them to be finally crowned with success. I do not mean to say that excellence is to be attained at once in any other pursuit; in all, there are difficulties and perplexities to encounter which industry and perseverance only can surmount, but perhaps in none more

than in this.--Think well on these things, my son, endeavour not to give a greater preponderance to your inclination for the profession than to the obvious objections which lie against it; you will then have done all that you can to decide the question fairly.—If Heaven should yet spare my life,—if I be still permitted to remain awhile longer as your counsellor and instructor, I would ask no more than that the certain objections should be weighed well against the possible advantages before your determination be made;—this I ask of you, to this I earnestly exhort you, if the present be the last counsel I am ever able to give.

"I will not disguise from you, my dear Walter, that there are other professions to which I had much rather have seen you incline, yet it never was my idea to compel you to embrace one from which you were yourself averse. A parent's duty, in an affair of such unspeakable importance, it appears to me extends no further than to advise, it does not admit of control; and he who has compelled a child to enter into a profession contrary to his inclinations, is himself alone responsible for any disastrous consequences to which it may lead.

"There is still another point, my son, to which I must call your attention.—Your know-

ledge of the great works in this art is at present very confined;—the pictures which you have been accustomed to see at Mr. Conway's are indeed good, but their number is small;—get access to a more enlarged knowledge of the productions of the great masters, before you determine to embrace this profession. Consider them well,—consider how you would like to fall far short of their excellence, and consider how very difficult it is even to approach it;—consider, among the numbers who have made the attempt how many have failed, how few have succeeded, and then consider whether prudence would not rather recommend to your choice some profession in which it is more within a person's power to command excellence. Some there are, where the will to excel is almost of itself sufficient to insure the attainment of excellence. By industry and application a man may command the knowledge requisite to make an eminent lawyer, physician, or divine, though he may still not have it in his power to command the success with which his knowledge ought to be recompensed;—but, in painting, how ardently soever his industry may be exerted, he can as little command the attainment of excellence as of the success which it deserves."

Walter listened with profound attention to

he unwelcome truths which his anxious parent was thus submitting to his consideration. One while his eyes were cast upon the ground, the next they were suddenly raised and turned towards his father, while the flash of genius illumined his whole countenance:—he looked in these moments like one inspired, and I could have fancied him really destined to fulfil his own reveries, and become the founder of new discoveries in his art. But this flash soon passed away, and was lost in looks of sadness and dejection, as his eyes caught the pallid features of the beloved speaker:—for Walter tenderly loved his father, however that volatile disposition over which he seemed to have no power, was the occasion of his often filling his bosom with the most cruel anxiety;—that bosom, to purchase tranquillity for which he would readily have laid down his life.

Let me not be thought here to advance a paradox. I am sure that Walter would have submitted with the heroism of an ancient Roman to the stroke of death, if by such a sacrifice he could have purchased his father's happiness;—for this would have been the exertion of the moment only, and he was capable of any act of magnanimity which could be performed on the immediate impulse;—it was where steadiness and perseverance in pursuing

the same object for a length of time were necessary, that he, failed :—he could act well, his misfortune was that he could not think.

"It is enough, my father," he exclaimed: "I will not add to all my other faults this last and greatest, of devoting myself to a pursuit which you cannot approve. I know you will judge better for me than I can for myself, and from this moment I resign myself to your judgement alone. Tell me but your wishes, and I here give you the most solemn assurance that they shall be to me a law. I have been hitherto unworthy of all the kindness, all the indulgence you have shown me; but henceforward made sensible of my errors, my constant endeavour shall be to correct them. I have dwelt upon the idea of converting what has always been my favourite amusement into my sole occupation, till I could see in the pursuit nothing but a path strewed with roses; I never reflected that these roses must be mingled with thorns. Henceforth I shall cease to regard it in any other light than as a mere amusement, and wait only to know your wishes, my father, before my decision shall be made. Believe me, I had rather, much rather, you should decide the question for me, than have it left to my own choice."

I am afraid that Mr. Armstrong thought of

the perfect submission to his wishes here professed by his son, as I own I did myself, that it was merely the effusion of a heart strongly impressed at the moment with one only idea, that of setting his father's mind at ease, and that it would be evanescent, as numberless other emotions of the like kind had proved. I had so often seen similar impressions made upon his mind by some striking event, such as was then passing, which an indifferent observer would have supposed must be permanent, yet pass away almost as hastily, that I could not see any just reason to consider the present as likely to be more lasting.

"No, my son," replied Mr. Armstrong, "it is not because I desire to have the sole direction of this point so important to your happiness that I have said thus much;—all I wish is to put you in possession of the means of deciding fairly for yourself. It is not in my power,—it is not in the power of any human being,—to point out a profession wholly free from objections. I have thought it right to display to you some of the most important, which, in my present hasty view of the subject, seemed to present themselves against this; but I have not stated them for the purpose of alluring you hastily to abandon a favourite idea, and submit yourself wholly to my guidance;—they have

been stated with no other view than to warn you, that if this profession should be your ultimate choice, you must not expect to find it free from difficulties, mortifications, and disappointments. In calculating coolly and dispassionately the obstacles which we may have to encounter in any pursuit, we should always bear in mind, that in being prepared against them there is better chance of finding some means by which they may be avoided; or, if they must be encountered, of combating them successfully, and finally triumphing over them. If we enter upon a road the outset of which is smooth and even, unwarned that we are in our progress to find it rough, stony, and full of dangers, how shall we hope, unprepared as we are, to pass through them in safety? Warned of our danger, precautions will be taken to lessen the risks we are to run; and though the toils and struggles of the course cannot be avoided, they may be successfully surmounted, and we may arrive prosperously at the end of our journey. I would fain see you, my dear child, take time to reflect on what you are about;—this is no light and trivial matter;—remember. O remember! that on the determination you make at this moment, must depend much of the future happiness or misery of your life."

Walter could hear no more;—his warm feelings were awakened, where his father only wished to awaken reflection; and turning away to hide the starting tear, he rose up hastily and left the room. "O Samuel!" said Mr. Armstrong, "what is to become of that poor boy?—He is, he ever will be, I fear, the mere creature of impulse; he will never be able to reason upon any thing, and I shudder for the consequences. How ill is such a disposition suited to the struggles which every one has more or less to encounter in his passage through life!—If it does not lead him into vice, I can scarcely hope that it will not lead to misery."

This scene gave me the most cruel uneasiness;—the physician had appeared to wish above all things that his patient's mind should be kept tranquil, and I dreaded the result of a conversation so adverse to its composure. He had been sitting up in his easy chair during the conference;—I would fain now have persuaded him to lie down and endeavour to compose his spirits; but he said, "No, Samuel, they will be more relieved by some quiet conversation with you."

After a short pause he proceeded:—"I know not what opinion I ought to form upon the probable event of this affair. Walter is

so much the creature of impulse, that perhaps I might be authorized in hoping to find the present inclination pass away, like many others, and be soon forgotten;—yet I am disposed to think otherwise. I am more inclined to believe that in this point only he will show some steadiness; and if it should hereafter appear that I am not mistaken, I would by no means have constraint used to induce him to abandon it. If any hope may be entertained of his becoming settled at last, where is there such reasonable ground for it, as in his being permitted to pursue the only object on which his mind has ever been steadily fixed? Samuel, I wished to say thus much, that my sentiments may be known to you, if hereafter events should make it desirable that some one should be acquainted with them. But now let us drop the subject, for I wish to question you about yourself;—I have not yet had an opportunity of inquiring whether you have come to any decision upon the point agitated between us last summer;—you have no doubt reflected much upon it?"

"I have indeed, sir; but excuse me if I entreat you not to harass yourself at present upon my account. When you are recovered, and I trust in heaven that this is an event to which we may look forward with confidence, it will

be time enough to trouble you with my concerns."

"No, Samuel, let me not postpone to another day, a duty which I feel my strength equal to performing at this moment, lest another day should not be granted me.—I have made you so much the child of my adoption, that I feel the ties which I have created to myself towards you, scarcely less binding than if you had really been my son, nor could I stand acquitted to my conscience if I did not take a father's interest in whatever concerns you. Tell me, then, are your sentiments changed by your residence at college?—do you now feel less repugnance than formerly to the clerical office?—can you dispose your mind freely to consent to your father's wishes?"

"Indeed, sir, I regret to say that my repugnance to taking orders is greater than ever; and if I should do so at last, it will be decidedly against my own inclinations. By one motive alone shall I be influenced, in defiance of a thousand others which repel me, if I do finally engage in the ministry—my father—"

"Then say no more," he interrupted. "If such be your feelings, I have no hesitation in saying that you ought not to think any more of the profession. I have explained my sentiments fully upon this question, and it would

give me pain to see you exercising the sacred functions of the ministry when I knew that your heart had no share in them. Now let me ask one thing more:—In abandoning this idea, have you decided on any other pursuit in which you wish to engage? and is it in my power to forward your views?"

I replied that to both questions I could answer in the affirmative, and then unfolded to him my ideas of soliciting his interest with Mr. Carberry to engage him to take me into his service in any way in which he could give me employment.

Mr. Armstrong observed that this was not what he expected to hear; but he thought I had shown great prudence in restraining my ideas to a situation which it was so immediately within the power of my friends to procure for me, and in which my father's means would be adequate to supporting me as long as I should continue to want his assistance. "I was afraid indeed," said he, "that you might have aspired at a profession less within our power to assist you;—I own I suspected that the study of the law was your object; and that could not be pursued but at an expense far beyond what your father could afford."

To this I answered, that he had actually divined the proper object of my wishes,—that

it was the profession which of all others I should have preferred, had it been possible to consult my inclinations alone, and I had actually speculated how far it might be practicable for me to engage in it; but I was soon convinced that my father's means could never be sufficient to maintain me in so expensive a study, and I therefore turned my ideas to an employment in which I could immediately look to some profit, if not enough for my entire maintenance.

"Be satisfied," he said. "I am sure that both my sister and brother-in-law will not only readily consent to your wishes, but that Mr. Carberry will even think himself fortunate in having a young man in his service in whom he can place such entire confidence. It only remains then, Samuel, to break the matter to your father. This I had promised to undertake. I would gladly have spared you the chagrin of first mentioning the subject to him, but in my present state I feel myself wholly incompetent to the task. I have not now strength sufficient to encounter the emotions which may be excited in him by so cruel a disappointment. He is hasty; and as he will feel deeply, he may perhaps be warm in the expression of his feelings;—I dare not risk the meeting this conflict;—I can only venture to talk with him when he shall be somewhat

prepared, and endeavour to reason him into an acquiescence in the stroke, and into bearing it with resignation. This I will most joyfully do, and I wish it not delayed. From my own feelings I am convinced that my state must be very precarious, and I dare not delay executing any purpose which I am anxious should be fulfilled before I leave the world. And even though it should please Heaven to spare my life, yet perhaps what I shall say may have more influence with your father if offered in my present state, than when I am in perfect health :—the situation of the speaker has often considerable influence in giving weight to what he wishes to enforce."

I could only repeat my warmest thanks for the fresh instance of kindness here shown me by this excellent man, and it was agreed that I should mention the subject to my father immediately, and engage him to come to the rectory to talk it over with him.

CHAPTER II.

An argument with myself.—Resolved for me.—One of the most important dialogues in the history.—Logical reasoning.—Another very important discussion in the way of dialogue.

FROM the first of Mr. Armstrong's attack, I had been constantly at the rectory all day, I only returned home at night. On the evening immediately following the conversation above related, and which was the day after that of neighbour Burrell's funeral, I prolonged my walk home considerably, debating with myself all the way, in what manner the meditated disclosure to my father could best be brought about. I had some reluctance to entering upon the subject at this moment;—my father had scarcely recovered the mortification which his medical skill had sustained from the very rapid manner in which he had disencumbered himself of his late patient, and I thought that perhaps it would be wrong in me so soon to inflict upon him another and a still severer mortification. It was also a task of no little magnitude to arm myself with the resolution necessary for sustaining the conflict which I must unavoidably encounter;—I was determined to meet my father's anger with firm-

ness, yet I was equally anxious not to transgress against that respect which I felt due to the relationship in which we stood to each other. I was fully resolved not to give way to him; Mr. Armstrong had taught me to consider the question not merely as one between my parent and myself, when perhaps the duty and affection of a child ought to have a great preponderance, but as one of much higher importance;—as a question which concerned the honour and interests of religion, and consequently of the Almighty Being to whom our religious vows are addressed;—as one therefore in which there was a duty to be attended to paramount to that even which we owe to a parent.

I entered my father's doors still undetermined whether to mention the subject then, or to postpone it for a few days; and if then, whether to make it the topic of our evening's or morning's conversation. On the one hand, I rather started from the idea of disturbing my father's repose by sending him to bed with his mind in such a state of irritation as I knew it would be from the communication which I had to make;—on the other hand, I thought it much better for Mr. Armstrong's sake that he should have a night to reflect upon the matter, and in

some sort compose his mind upon it, before the meditated conference with him. The turn however which the conversation took over the supper table decided all these questions, and led me, almost insensibly to myself, immediately to unburthen my mind of the load which pressed so heavily upon it.

My father's first question was, as usual, how our patient was going on? to which I replied that we could not as yet perceive any essential amendment;—that he had passed a tolerably easy day, yet the physician appeared as undecided as ever in his opinion as to the termination of the malady.

"And nevertheless, I suppose, persists in the same medicines?—He's too proud to change 'em, because that would look as if he had been wrong; else there's things enough he might try, and be sure, if they didn't do good, they'd for certain do no harm." I saw what he was thinking of—that he could not help still clinging to his favourite specific notwithstanding its late ill success, yet smarting under that reflection did not dare downright to recommend it:—a hint that way was the utmost he could venture.

"Indeed I do not know, father," said I, "that the medicines have not been altered

from the first prescriptions, and have reason to think otherwise;—I suspect that some alteration was made in them yesterday."

"But perhaps the change was not a bit for the better! Oh Sam! Sam! I'm sure the dear good man will die;—I'm sure we shall lose him! and what a dreadful loss to us all!"

"Indeed I believe that few people could go out of the world more universally and more deservedly esteemed and regretted than Mr. Armstrong."

"And such a stroke upon you, Sam! You will have no one now to direct your studies, to assist you with good advice when you enter into the service of the church. I looked to his letting you preach for the first time in his own pulpit,—to his correcting your sermon when you had prepared it for the occasion. O Sam! where will you preach now for the first time! perhaps two or three hundred miles off, where I may not be able to hear you. Which however I will hear you nevertheless, if I am alive and have a leg to move upon; for I'd sooner walk from here to York, than not be present when your first sermon is preached."

I looked at him,—my heart smote me with the mortification and disappointment I was

going to inflict: but the moment seemed favourable, a sort of opening was made for the introduction of what I wished to say, and I would not permit myself to shrink from it. I looked at him earnestly—"My father," I said.

"Well, what's the matter, Sam? I never saw you look so strange."

"I think I shall never preach at all."

"Not preach at all!!!" The talent of my friend Walter would be requisite here to give a just idea of the expression of my father's countenance, as he pronounced these four short monosyllables:—the pencil of the painter might give some idea of it,—it is impossible for the pen of the narrator to give any.—"Not preach at all!"—again he emphatically exclaimed,—"Sam, I don't understand you."

"No, father, I think I never shall preach."

"And pray what should hinder you?—I hope there's pulpits enough in the kingdom, though we mayn't have another minister here who'll show you as much kindness as Mr. Armstrong has done.—And what should ail you that you can't preach any where else but here?—You don't suppose, I hope, because I meant to get Mr. Armstrong to let you preach here for the first time, that I never intended you to preach any where else!"

"I know that, father.—But, pray excuse me, father! pray forgive me!"

"Well, what am I to forgive?"

"Indeed, father, you must forgive me, but I never can be a clergyman."

"I suppose then you mean to go back to your old fancy of shoeing horses, and be . . . ."

I am afraid that an oath, or something like one, notwithstanding his recent animadversions on neighbour Burrell's infirmity, was here quivering upon my father's lips:—if so, I must however do him the justice to say, that it was the only instance in his life when I ever knew him so nearly guilty of being betrayed into one,—and even now it was stifled before it had found utterance.—"No, not so, father," I said, "but do pray hear me with patience!"

"Patience!—No, I have no patience with you!—Is this the end of all that I have done to make a man of you, to take you out of the mean station to which you were born?—You have no regard for your family, no wish to raise 'em from the dirt—you are not my son—you are just like your grandfather and your great grandfather, which they never thought of any thing better than blowing their bellows and hammering their iron,—they had none of my spirit,—they never thought of raising

their family above the low situation in which they found it.—Well, get back then to the forge if it must be so, and talk Greek to the horses if you can't make no better use of your learning."

"Father, I'm afraid the horses wouldn't understand me."—My father notwithstanding his anger could not help smiling.—I took advantage of this gleam of sunshine:—"There are other ways, father," I said, "in which a man may raise his family, besides being a clergyman."

"Well, so there be.—And what would you have then?—I suppose you want to be a lawyer, because you know I can't afford it?—I was a great fool for my pains when I took you promiscuously over to the assizes at Salisbury; I thought to show you a little more of the world, and I'm fitted for it:—which 'tis my real belief that your wise noddle has been thinking of nothing but the law ever since."

"'Tis true, father, that if you could have afforded it, I should have liked very much to be a lawyer; but I know you cannot, so I never thought about that."

"For that matter, it doesn't much signify what you've thought of; for as long as you don't please to follow what I've thought of for

you, you may go about your business and do as you can,—I sha'n't give myself any further trouble about you."

"Don't say so, father!"

"Yes, but I do say so."

"Am I not your son,—your only child?"

"So much the worse for me."

"I hope, father, you don't really think so. —You always told me that I was a good son, —You always made me believe that you were satisfied with my conduct."

"Because I always thought that you meant to do as I would have you.—A fine story truly to tell Mr. Armstrong!—After all that he has done for you, after all the pains he has taken to make you a good man, aye and a learned man too, which it was entirely that you might be an ornament to the church, to go and tell him that you won't go into the church at all! —For my part, I never could have the face to tell him so.—I wouldn't for all the world have such a thing said to him now that he's ill;—'twould be enough to break his heart, to think how all his pains were thrown away.—And I'm sure if he gets well, which I heartily pray to God that he may, you must tell him yourself,—I never shall have impudence enough."

"Father, he knows it already."

"Knows it!!!"—Again it would be neces-

sary to call in the aid of the pencil to give a just idea of the speaker's countenance.—"Knows it!!!" again he exclaimed.—"Sam, I never yet caught you in a lie, but I don't know how to persuade myself that you 're not telling one now."

"Indeed, father, 'tis true.—I consulted him about it before I thought of mentioning the thing to you."

"Well, and what did he say?"

"He advised me by all means, if I was repugnant to going into the church, not to think of it.—It was impossible, he said, for any body to perform his duty properly as a minister of religion, unless he had his whole heart in the profession;—he said too, father, that if you would but come and talk with him, he thought he could convince you that I was doing right in abandoning all idea of the church."

"He'll have a tough job of it though, I can tell him, for I'm not so easily convinced.—But pray, sir, how came you by this repugnance to the church that you talk of?—how came you not to have your whole heart in the profession?—which I'm sure I've been trying ever since you was born to make you have your whole heart in it.—'Tis nothing but mere perverseness, I believe, and I don't know what has made you take this perverse fit so pro-

miscuously now, for I never knew you guilty of such an one before."

"Well, father, only talk to Mr. Armstrong about it:—you have a great respect, I am sure, for his opinion, and so indeed has every body that knows him.—If he does not convince you I am right, I will endeavour to recall my present sentiments, and reconcile my mind to what you wish."

"Get you gone to bed then, and I'll think about it."

"Father!"

"Well,—what now?"

"You were accustomed always to bless me when we parted for the night."

"And what then?"

"You will not surely withhold your blessing now!"

"Well, well, God bless you, and make you a good man, whatever else you may be!"

"Amen!—Amen!—my dear father, with all my heart!—and may he reward all your goodness to me! I never can repay it!"

"There, there,—go to bed."—His voice faltered as he uttered these last words, I even thought that I saw a tear start into his eye.—I hailed the omen as favourable,—it seemed to say that his heart was softening, and I left him

to meditate upon the matter, while I retired to do the same.

Our breakfast the next morning passed in profound silence, a thing not very usual among us, as it was certainly my father's turn to be rather loquacious. He seemed not able to prevail upon himself to be in perfect charity with me, yet was so little habituated to being otherwise that he set about it rather awkwardly:— I thought, however, that it was better to leave his mind to occupy itself with what had passed, than to say at that moment any thing more. When we had breakfasted I took my hat:— "What, you are going as usual to the rectory, I suppose, Sam?" said my father.

I replied in the affirmative. "Well," said he, "if our dear good man should be well enough to see me, you'll let me know, and I'll be sure to come whenever he sends for me.— Good b'ye, Sam! I suppose we sha'n't see you any more today, unless I happen to be wanted."

"Probably not, father, for Mr. Armstrong and Walter both like that I should be there."

"Nay, that's natural enough, and to be sure 'tis your duty to do as they wish.—Well, God send that you may find Mr. Armstrong better!"

"Aye, father, and I pray God so too, most sincerely!—Good morning, father,"—and I held out my hand to him. He took it and pressed it earnestly, with a look of such mingled affection and mortification, as more endangered my purpose being shaken than any of the hasty sallies that had escaped him the evening before. Even this, however, as I bent my way to the rectory, reflecting upon it, I thought it right to resist.

I found Mr. Armstrong much as he had been the day before,—tolerably easy, yet with no very decided appearance of amendment. I recounted to him what had passed, and announced my father's readiness to attend a summons from him whenever he should be favoured with one. I was accordingly dispatched in the course of the morning to desire his attendance.

It were needless, and it would be tedious, to repeat over the arguments which the worthy rector employed to satisfy my father, and convince him that I was doing right; they were in substance the same as he had used to me, and which have been already related. On any other subject his opinion would have carried immediate conviction with it; on this alone it was not easy even for Mr. Armstrong to persuade my father out of his ideas. Indeed

he only found fresh fuel for his indignation, when in the course of the discussion he first learned the employment in which I proposed to engage. Far from coinciding with the rector's opinion that I had evinced great prudence by thinking of an employment in which his means were so fully competent to giving me what assistance I might yet require, and which it was so entirely in the power of my friends to procure for me, it was evident that my fault in abandoning the path he had chalked out for me, was not a little aggravated by that into which I proposed my steps to be diverted. Must he then still be doomed to see the name of Danville connected with trade, not raised as he had fondly hoped to a situation in which it would have ranked among the class of gentlemen!—It seemed of small consideration with him that the trade in question was in fact a great elevation of the family; still it was trade, and that was an idea not easy to be digested.

At one period cf the conversation he had begun to talk rather in high terms about parental authority, and to hint at some exertion of it to compel my submission, which Mr. Armstrong thought approached too near to violence.

"Robert," said he, "you surely do not

consider what you are saying,—you do not reflect seriously upon the nature of the relationship between a parent and his child. I am far from concurring in the opinion that children ought not to be kept under any control by their parents, lest their tempers should be hurt and their spirit broken; but I think that parental authority, like all other authority, has its limits, and that there is a point beyond which a child is not bound to yield obedience to a parent,—when resistance even becomes a duty. Excuse me, Robert, I consider you as a man of sense, as a reasonable man, or I should never have interested myself so deeply in promoting your views with regard to your son; still less should I have concerned myself with endeavouring to arrange to your mutual satisfaction the present question between you and him. I consider you as having fulfilled hitherto in an exemplary manner the high and important duty of a father, and that a great measure of obedience to your will, and deference to your wishes, is therefore due from your son; still I think that you have no right to expect unlimited obedience.

"If this were a question between you and him alone, though I should sincerely regret to see that in complying with your wishes he must act in direct opposition to his own, I might

perhaps think that much exertion was due on his part, to conform himself to the wish of a parent who has done so much for him. Yet even then, I think that a father who really values as he ought his child's happiness, should weigh well how far he can justify it to his conscience, and consequently to the great arbiter of conscience, merely for his own selfish gratification to restrain that child so materially in his reasonable wishes. He should reflect that while his own race is running towards its close, that of his child is but beginning; and 'tis therefore of less importance to himself that his inclinations should be thwarted, for the few remaining years he has to live, than that his child's should be so; since, according to all human probability, this uneasy feeling must be endured by him for a so much greater length of time.

"Consider that 'tis you who have called this being into existence,—he had no choice whether he would, or would not, have that existence conferred upon him;—this can give you no authority to make him miserable here, and perhaps, by placing him in a situation to which he is wholly repugnant, lead him into temptations which may endanger his eternal happiness hereafter. Far from creating to yourself such an authority by becoming a fa-

ther, you then entered into a tacit compact both with your God and with your offspring, that nothing should be wanting on your part to render that offspring good and happy in this world, that he might be qualified to become a candidate for eternal happiness in another. This duty, I repeat it, you have hitherto fulfilled in a manner which has doubtless acquitted you both to your God and to your conscience; then do not swerve from it at the most important crisis which has yet occurred in the life of your son. An infant must be controlled,—over him parental authority must be exerted,—and the parent who does not exert authority to correct the infant propensities of his child when he sees that they have an improper tendency, is even culpable towards him. But your son is arrived at an age when some respect ought to be had to his own choice and judgement. At his years a man is capable of distinguishing in a considerable degree what is best for himself, unless in cases where a palpable deficiency of understanding precludes the possibility of his ever being abandoned to his own guidance. I do assure you that it is not my intention to exercise the kind of authority over my son which you seem disposed to exercise over yours. I am afraid he has taken a turn much in opposition to my wishes, but I

shall do no more than admonish him of the objections which lie against the profession he wishes to follow, and then leave him to his own choice. How much more, then, do I think that such confidence ought to be reposed in your son, since I will freely own to you, Robert, that I think him much more capable of judging for himself, than Walter!

"All this I should say, even if the present were a question of an indifferent nature, some matter of worldly concern alone, on which your opinion was at variance with your son's. But here a much higher interest is involved. Would you see your child a hypocrite?—would you see him engage in a sacred compact with his God for the administration of those duties enjoined for the service of the religion he has given us, while his heart has no inclination to the performance of them?—It is not want of a due respect for religion itself, by which he is influenced;—it is not absence of devotional feelings which occasions his objection to entering into the ministry;—he is more steadily and seriously devout than is usual in a person of his years, and that not from habit merely, but from having reflected deeply upon the origin and nature of our religion, upon the sacrifices which it demands, and the duties which it inculcates. His repugnance is not to

the religion, but to being a minister of it;—he will readily join in the services of the church, but he is averse to the performance of them. Indeed, Robert, you, who are yourself a religious man, ought to consider this question in a religious point of view, and as one in which the interference of parental authority is wholly excluded. Nay, I must observe, that while you are suffering yourself to think of exercising this act of authority over your son, one motive of his desiring to follow a different profession is consideration for yourself and his mother. Sensible as he ought to be of the sacrifices you have both made for his sake, he earnestly desires to see himself, as soon as possible, in a situation when he may be able to repay your past self-denials, by contributing to the ease and comfort of your declining years;—this wish he sees may be much sooner accomplished by applying himself to trade, than by going into the church.

"One thing more I cannot omit;—for, having taken upon myself to talk to you on this subject, I hold it my duty to place it in every possible point of view, even at the hazard of saying things which may appear somewhat harsh. I would then ask, What is the ruling motive that occasions this extreme anxiety to see your son a clergyman?—The idea of your

family being *aggrandized*, according to the usual acceptation of that term.—And shall the solid, the essential happiness of one so dear to you, be sacrificed to a mere empty sound?—Robert, I appeal to your own good sense, whether you could derive any real satisfaction from seeing your son, your only child, made a sacrifice to what I can scarcely call by any milder epithet than an idle vanity. Believe me, the name of Danville will be rendered much more respectable in the world, if it can be said that he who bore it discharged through life in the most exemplary manner the duties of a man, of a parent, and of a christian, than if it could merely be said that a person of that name had *once* served as a minister of religion.—And let me observe, moreover, that in putting the young man into this profession you are perhaps even counteracting your own views, and instead of making him the means of raising the name to future honours and distinctions, it may prove the occasion of its being discontinued entirely. Your son has no prospect if he goes into the church of being able to settle and marry soon;—by the time he has the means of doing so he may very likely have lost the inclination; and dying without heirs, instead of his becoming the founder of a new æra in the family, it may in his person become extinct."

I am afraid, if a full confession is to be made of all my father's weakness, that this last suggestion had more weight with him than all the moral and religious considerations which had been urged. He could not, however, condescend so far as immediately to own himself in the wrong; but thanking Mr. Armstrong for all the pains he had bestowed upon me, for the interest he took in the present question, and for the good counsel which he had at that moment been giving him, he assured him he would reconsider the matter well, and then with his permission communicate to him the result.

This was the first time that my father had seen Mr. Armstrong since his illness. When I returned home in the evening,—" Sam," said he, " I don't know that I ever was so shocked in my life as at seeing our dear good man this morning!—How pale, how sadly, he does look!—O he'll die, Sam!—mind my words; as sure as twopence he'll die!"

" Don't say so, father!—let us still hope!—and indeed I do not think he looks so ill as he did some days ago."

" That's nothing at all;—nobody that ever looked as he does got over an illness:—I 've had practice enough to know that. Why now our poor neighbour as died t'other day, he never looked half so bad; no not after he was quite

dead and gone;—which if he had, to be sure I should have known it fast enough that he must die. But as to poor good Mr. Armstrong, 'tisn't all the doctors nor all the medicines in the world that can save him, as sure as I'm my father's own son. So, Sam, this has made me think,—it has made me think, Sam. Sam, I wanted to consult you,—to ask your advice about something."

"Indeed, father, I am much flattered by your thinking me capable of giving you advice."

"Why as to that, Sam, though I am your father, which therefore to be sure people might fairly enough think that I ought to be the most capable of giving advice of the two, yet, for my part, after all the instruction you have had from dear good Mr. Armstrong, which I never was so lucky, you know, as to have such a learned man to instruct me, and I should think it a great shame, therefore, if you wasn't capable of judging of a few things;—his instructions would be finely thrown away if you were not."

"Indeed I own with the deepest gratitude what infinite pains he has taken to form and mature my judgement."

"Well then, Sam, this is the matter.—If it should please God to take our good man, I should wish to pay all possible respect to his memory."

"I don't doubt it, father;—I am sure we should all be very ungrateful if we did not endeavour to show it every possible respect."

"And yet we ought not to pay greater respect even to him than to the greatest of all beings."

"Certainly not, father."

"'Tis that which puzzles me."

"But what creates the perplexity?"

"Sam, I suppose, if the dear good man should die, you would go into mourning for him?"

"Indeed, father, considering the great obligations I owe him, I think it would be but a proper piece of respect."

"And you'd have new black clothes?"

"I must, you know, father;—for never having been in mourning yet, I have no black clothes at all."

"And, Sam, I was thinking,—I was thinking that it would be equally proper,—for you know, Sam, though 'tis you who have the advantage of all his good teaching and instruction, yet the favour was as great to my wife and me, because it was to oblige us that he begun it...."

"Very true, father;—we are all under the greatest obligations to him, and cannot too much testify our gratitude."

"That's my thought,—and so I was considering in my own mind whether it wouldn't be right for me and my old dame to go into mourning."

"I am quite of that opinion, father."

"And have new clothes?"

"Certainly."

"But then there's one thing."

"What's that, father?"

"Why you know, Sam, that though I have been very particular, ever since Mr. Armstrong did me the honour to make me clerk, to have a black coat to wear on a Sunday, which I think that every clerk ought always to have black clothes, yet I never bought a new one; I only bought as good a second hand one as I could get at John Dynes's at Ambresbury, except when I went to Salisbury assizes, and then I got one there. For I never could have got on one of Mr. Armstrong's, because he's quite a thin spare man, and I'm stout enough, God knows; which else I should have been proud to have had any thing on my back which had ever been on his, instead of thinking it mean to have only a second-hand coat,—which that I never did, though it wasn't Mr. Armstrong's, but nobody knows whose. But as for that, I thought it was not for such as me

to be above wearing second-hand clothes,—so I never bought a new black coat."

"The greater reason, father, why you should afford a new one on this melancholy occasion, supposing the event we dread to take place."

"I can't say, Sam, that I'm quite sure of that."

"And what makes you think otherwise, father?"

"Why, look ye now:—you see, as I never had a new coat to attend the service of God, mightn't it appear showing more respect to our earthly benefactor than to our great and good Benefactor above?—which you know, Sam, it wouldn't be right to be more respectful even to Mr. Armstrong than to the service of God."

"Surely, father, it is not to be supposed that the great Being to whom you allude thinks respect or disrespect is shown him by attention or inattention to matters of so very trivial a nature."

"How do I know that they are trivial in his eyes? If he numbers the hairs of our heads, as we are told in Scripture that he does, why may he not concern himself about our coats? I certainly would wish to pay every possible respect to Mr. Armstrong, which that I'm sure I have a good right to do; but I shouldn't like

for people to say, There's Bob Danville pays more respect to the parson than to the parson's master."

"I cannot suppose, father, that any body could think of saying such a thing,—or that a Being who reads the heart, and knows whatever is passing there, when he sees the integrity of yours, and feels how much he has always been feared, reverenced, and loved by you, could be offended at such a token of respect and gratitude as you propose paying to an earthly benefactor. On the contrary, since there is scarcely any vice so detestable in his eyes as ingratitude, it is to be presumed that he would rather approve your testifying an opposite principle in a manner conformable to the innocent customs of the world."

As I communicated this opinion, my father's eyes were filled with an expression of such superlative delight as I scarcely ever witnessed in any one upon any occassion, either before or since. He grasped my hand eagerly :—"Ah! Sam!" said he, "my dear Sam, what a pleasure it is to hear you talk so!—not only for the things you say of your poor old father, which to be sure no child could say more kind things; —and to think that you, who have more learning than I, and can judge better what is pleasing to God, should believe that his goodness ap-

proves of my endeavours to do my duty, that to be sure does make me very thankful:—but 'tis also a great pleasure to hear how you can talk; and I think nobody of your age, let him be whose son he will, does talk better.—O if you had but talked in this way in the——!—but I won't say a word about that:—only 'tis such a pleasure to hear how capable you are of talking, that it makes one think,—it makes one long somehow;—but I won't say another word,—only you talk so well that 'tis fit to convince every body that you must be right; which so, if it should please God to take Mr. Armstrong, as I am sure I heartily pray it may not, why then I will have a new coat."

While I was made very happy by the pleasure I had communicated to my father from a few unstudied words, which I certainly did not expect would produce so strong an effect, I could not help, at the same time, being somewhat amused at the great importance he seemed to attach to a new black coat, and the rather humorous apprehension, lest in endeavouring to do honour to Mr. Armstrong he might lay himself open to the imputation of want of respect where a much higher degree of respect was due.

Whether the rector's excellent reasoning, or the happy tribute to my father's real goodness

of heart which I had here thrown in, operated the most forcibly upon his mind, I will not pretend to determine; but he certainly was by some cause or other, or by a combination of causes, soon softened with regard to my *rebellion against his will,* as at first he seemed disposed to term my objection to taking orders. Or perhaps, in justice to his common sense, in which he really was not deficient, I ought rather to ascribe his conversion to that being now allowed its free operation;—to believe that, when he came to reflect coolly upon all that had passed, he could not help seeing and allowing that there was more truth and justice both in Mr. Armstrong's ideas and mine, than he was at first willing to concede. However this might be, it is certain that after some further conversation with me, and this became now a regular topic of discussion between us, in a very amicable way, both morning and evening, finding that my resolution was not to be shaken, he thought it as well to make a virtue of necessity, and to give his full and unrestricted consent to my following my own judgement. He at the same time observed, that in this country a wealthy merchant was a character of no small consideration, and that, if I should not be a gentleman at once, I might become one in time; and as to the delay, he rested for his consolation

upon the same reflection which had soothed him into resignation during the number of years he remained childless,—*that we must wait God's good time for every thing.*

He announced this decision to Mr. Armstrong a few days after, with renewed acknowledgements for all the kindness shown by the excellent rector to himself and his whole family. To these acknowledgements were added expressions of satisfaction more cordial than I had almost dared to hope for; that, since the first wish of his heart was thus unavoidably to be relinquished, the disappointment would receive so great a compensation as would be communicated by seeing me become in some sort a part of the family of my benefactor. Mr. Armstrong in return made him some compliments upon the good sense and true paternal affection shown in his acquiescence with my inclinations, and promised to mention without delay to his sister, my wish of being received into the service of her husband.

CHAPTER III.

The plot begins to thicken.—More physicians.—New arrivals at the rectory.—Agreeable intelligence.—The mind and body both relieved.

Mrs. Carberry was indeed, by the time when it was determined that an application should be made to her in my behalf, become an inmate of the rectory at Langham. The accounts she received of her brother's state alarmed her so much, that she obtained her husband's permission to go down and attend upon him; and having at the same time intimated a wish that the opinion of some eminent physician in London should be taken upon his case, Mr. Carberry very generously desired that one might be carried down entirely at his expense. He said that it was his anxious wish to testify by every means in his power how grateful he felt for the happiness he had enjoyed in his union with her; and though regretting the occasion which had called forth the present expression of his sentiments, he was truly rejoiced that his means permitted the affording her the satisfaction of doing every thing in her power to save so valuable a life.

The physician's visit was indeed the source of very great consolation to us all. A radical

cure of the complaint, he said, was a thing perhaps scarcely to be looked for, though even that was not wholly to be despaired of; but he thought there was great reason to hope for such a recovery from the present attack, as that by subsequent care and attention the progress of the complaint might be efficiently restrained, so that the patient might yet live many years without any material suffering. He ordered a considerable change in the medicines, and desired particularly that every attention might be paid to his being kept as quiet as possible.

The good effects of the new medicines were soon apparent, so that at the physician's second visit, which was about ten days after the first, he found such an amendment in the patient, that he said he thought there was no occasion for his coming down any more; that any further directions he had to give might be managed by correspondence. He gave him permission now to quit his room; but left it as a strict injunction in the general management of himself for the future, to be very cautious in the use of exercise; and above all things, not to think, without very material alteration as to some circumstances of his malady, of undertaking a long journey, since the motion of a carriage was a thing to be particularly deprecated for him as long as they continued. Re-

maining quiet at home, and only walking with great caution and moderation about his own premises, or at the utmost about his parish, he might gradually overcome these unfavourable symptoms ; but during their existence a journey would inevitably bring on an attack which would probably prove fatal.

It is impossible to describe the transport excited in the parish when it was known that there was a hope of their beloved pastor being yet spared to them for some years. The universal sentiment expressed upon the occasion was the most certain and ample testimony which could be given to the paternal care and attention shown by him to his flock ; every one seemed to consider his recovery in the light of a lost parent restored to him. My father, when he heard of the London doctor's arrival, and the change of medicines ordered, was very anxious to know the nature of the new ones, and interrogated me very minutely upon the subject; but I could not give him any more satisfaction than in the case of the Salisbury doctor's prescriptions. He said, however, he had no doubt that the London doctor, if he had chosen to speak the truth, would have said that jalap ought to have been given immediately ;—and when he heard of the beneficial effects produced by the new medicines, he pronounced

decidedly that jalap must be a principal ingredient in them; nor would any one, no, not even the doctor himself, have found it an easy matter to convince him of the contrary.

The marriage of Mr. Armstrong's eldest sister with Mr. Shelburne, an attorney at Warwick, was related at the time when it took place; but that gentleman and lady have not since appeared upon the *tapis*. A certain degree of friendly intercourse had however been kept up between Mr. and Mrs. Shelburne and Mr. Armstrong; a regular interchange of letters had been maintained, and occasional visits had passed between the families; but these were neither frequent nor of long duration. Mr. Shelburne was in great business, from which he scarcely allowed himself any relaxation, even in those summer months which in his profession are the least occupied of any in the year; and Mr. Armstrong not only was scrupulously exact about making his living his regular place of residence, but he even thought it not right to be frequently absent only on excursions of pleasure.

I have mentioned that in the first conversation I had with Mr. Armstrong after the commencement of his present illness, he said that he had provided by will for the guardianship of Walter, in case he should not live himself

to see him come of age. The guardian to whom he then alluded was, as I immediately conjectured, Mr. Shelburne. Many circumstances seemed to point to him as the properest person to whom such a trust could be consigned. He had the universal character of a man of strict honour and integrity, and of great knowledge in his profession; he had, besides, perfectly the manners of a gentleman, united with a liberal and well-informed mind. To these considerations was added his near connection with his destined ward, which must occasion him a particular interest in supplying to him as much as possible the place of a parent.

It was not without his previous consent obtained that Mr. Armstrong had appointed him to this trust; and Mr. Shelburne, aware of this, when he heard of his brother-in-law's dangerous state, thought that, in case of the disorder terminating fatally, he might be anxious to see him, to impart any directions which he wished to give with regard to his son. He therefore repaired to Langham, though with some inconvenience to himself, and arrived there only a few hours after Mrs. Carberry.

Walter, who still could not entirely shake off the idea that he had been himself the occasion of his father's illness, lost no time after his aunt Carberry's arrival, to communicate his

apprehensions to her; and the same communication was likewise made to his uncle Shelburne. Through this self-impeachment, both learned the object of their nephew's wishes before they had any conversation with their brother upon the subject. Not that Walter now allowed painting to be the object of his wishes; for though to me in private he dwelt upon nothing else, and I plainly saw that his mind was wholly fixed upon it, yet he constantly assured both his father and myself that he had renounced all thoughts of it as a profession, and only waited for his father's being sufficiently amended to bear more exertion, before some other should be fixed upon. To both Mr. Armstrong and myself, however, it appeared obvious that these assurances and protestations were founded entirely upon self-delusion.

At the period of Mrs. Carberry's and Mr. Shelburne's arrival, Mr. Armstrong himself considered his case as hopeless. Not that he was by nature disposed to cherish unnecessary alarms upon his own account; but having really suffered much, and not perceiving any manifest amendment in himself, there did appear sufficient ground for his apprehensions. Under these circumstances he was much affected with the sight both of his sister and his brother-in-law; particularly the latter, to whose care

he had so important a charge to consign; and he was very anxious to communicate to him without delay all that he wished to say upon the subject. But before he entered upon it, Mr. Shelburne desired on his side to communicate a piece of intelligence, which, he said, he thought would be interesting to him;—that he was himself about to move with his family to London. To this he had been induced by the invitation of a gentleman of his own profession in great business there, with whom he had been long connected; and who, wishing to retire, had promised to do every thing in his power to recommend him as his successor. He had even begun to make arrangements for his removal, and hoped to be settled in London by Christmas.

Mr. Armstrong's eyes, as he listened to this intelligence, were in a moment illumined with an expression of satisfaction, that bespoke it more than commonly interesting to him. "My dear brother," he said, "yes indeed I do most truly rejoice at hearing of this change in your situation! I should rejoice in it very sincerely, only in the prospect of an increase of prosperity and happiness to you and my sister; but I must confess that selfish motives now render it peculiarly interesting to me. The readiness with which you undertook at my request the impor-

tant charge I have consigned to you, I consider, I do assure you, as an act of no common kindness, of no common friendship; I will even say of no common Christian virtue. For indeed, my brother, it is a very arduous charge. We often hear of the blindness of parents towards the imperfections of their children,—I cannot understand this feeling. The more nearly our hearts are concerned in the object, the more tremblingly alive it appears natural to me that we should be to its imperfections;—at least I cannot disguise that such are my feelings with regard to my poor Walter. Perhaps I have been over anxious about him; but I believe no one perfectly free from vice or vicious dispositions, and that indeed he is, ever gave a parent more uneasiness. He must in time be left to his own guidance; but he will be a child all his days, and never fit to guide himself:—what then may become of him! My heart bleeds when I think of it.

"Mr. Shelburne, he has taken a turn which only increases my uneasiness upon his account, and of which it is necessary that you should be informed."

"I am already acquainted with it, my dear sir," interrupted Mr. Shelburne; "poor Walter is under such deep concern upon the sub-

ject, considering it as the occasion of your illness, that I had not been many minutes in the house before he unburdened himself to me, with the bitterest self-reproaches for his criminality, as he termed it; assuring me however, at the same time, that he had now abandoned the idea entirely."

"O would that it were so!—but I know not how to think it!—'Tis ever thus with him,—his warm feelings are now awakened;—when they subside I think that he will return to the same object: though, alas! when once gratified, I am afraid it is equally to be apprehended that the idea may be forsaken as lightly as it has been adopted. Yet if his mind be fixed upon it,—we must—ah, my brother!—we must submit. I have always thought it adviseable that the inclinations of young men should be consulted as far as is practicable in deciding the avocation they are to follow:—in the case of my poor boy I feel that they must rule absolutely. It will be impossible to *compel* him to settle to any thing:—even recommendation will avail little. He may see and acknowledge the expediency of the thing recommended;—he may even at the moment resolve to yield to it:—but, the transient impression past, it would be thought of no more. The only chance of

his becoming settled is in his being allowed to follow what he has taken a passion for himself.

"My brother! think,—think what I must feel when seeing all this;—when knowing that I am the person on whom alone these difficulties should fall;—who alone should have the chagrin and uneasiness of leading such a disposition;—I have yet reason to fear that this charge must be consigned to another. Indeed, indeed, you know not what I suffer on this account. I ask myself whether it can be mismanagement on my part which has produced an effect I so deeply deplore:—yet I have kept my child strictly to business; have watched over him with the most anxious care: he has always been my companion and friend, as well as my pupil. I have done every thing in my power to correct his thoughtless and unsettled habits, except having recourse to what you know I detest, the discipline of the rod; and I cannot even now persuade myself that this possesses a charm to accomplish what all a father's most anxious cares and attentions have been unable to effect. If in this idea I am in an error, may Heaven pardon one for which I have suffered so deeply!

"Shall I open to you my whole heart, my brother?—You know the circumstances which

attended my marriage:—you know that I had a prior attachment, but, disappointed in that, I united myself to my poor Sophia from motives of compassion only. You know that the whole of this unfortunate affair arose from an error of mine in concealing my sentiments from my sisters, under the idea of delicacy towards them. That act of disguise has ever since sat heavy on my heart;—it has been the act of my whole life, in which I have found the deepest, the most serious cause of repentance. I have even been sometimes led to think, that the uneasiness I have experienced from my son's disposition was a chastisement inflicted by the hand of Heaven itself upon my fault. And yet perhaps I am here but aggravating that fault, in pretending to search into the ways of Providence, or even presuming to form a conjecture concerning them. Perhaps, considering the order of nature which his wisdom has thought proper to establish in the world, I ought rather to seek a physical than a moral cause for an effect so truly painful;—I ought to refer the distempered disposition of the son, to the diseased and enfeebled state of body under which his mother languished from the time of her marriage to her death. If so, how much ought I to condemn myself, that while thinking only of rescuing Sophia from

her impending fate, I did not reflect upon the possibility of giving birth to a diseased and feeble offspring!

"You are a man of resolution, my brother, but you are also a man of feeling:—you have discernment to see what is right, and firmness of mind to adhere steadily to the practice of it. To your discretion, then, I dare abandon the entire management of my son; and I most devoutly thank the gracious Father of mercies, that if I am to be removed from the care of him myself, I have the means of consigning that charge to one in whom I can place such unbounded confidence. I cannot say how much I rejoice in the idea of your removal to London, since it is there that he must necessarily be fixed if he follows his present idea; and you being on the spot, he will be more immediately under your eye. There is a request which I would wish earnestly to make,—perhaps it is more than I ought to think of asking, perhaps—"

"Let me anticipate, my dear sir, what you would say. You consider it as of vast importance to a young man, in such a place as London, where his residence shall be fixed.—Let my house then be his home:—let me in proposing this acquit myself of the charge I received from my wife on quitting her to come

hither. 'You know,' she said, 'the obligations which my sisters and myself owe to this kindest, best of brothers. 'My dear husband, I rely upon you to enable me in some sort to repay them. He must at the present awful moment have one great object of solicitude: O let our gratitude be shown through him! let not any thing be omitted which it is in our power to do for that beloved object! Our debt of gratitude is large; never may such another opportunity be presented of repaying it.' I gave her a faithful promise that her wishes should be fulfilled to the utmost possible extent; and assured her, that in fulfilling them I should be acting doubly in conformity with my own. 'Be assured then, my dear brother, that if your son is to be settled in London, whether as my ward or not, and most devoutly do I pray to Heaven that a guardian may not be wanted to him, no other place but my house shall ever be his home.' "

" O my brother!—this is kindness indeed; —kindness beyond what I had any right to ask,—beyond what I almost dared to think of. This is indeed to relieve my mind of a burden by which it was almost overpowered. If I am to be parted from my poor boy, how much more tranquilly shall I now resign my breath, knowing that he will not be thrown quite upon

the wide world! I have another sister: I looked to my Eleanor's house as one where he would be always kindly received. But though Mr. Carberry is a worthy and an honest man, I could not with equal confidence have seen him fixed permanently under his roof as under yours. If I die, my passage out of the world is now rendered more easy;—if I live, I shall with less apprehension see my son quit the sober retirement in which he has been educated, for the bustling scenes of the capital."

Perhaps the medicine here administered by Mr. Shelburne to the wounded mind of our patient had no inconsiderable influence in assisting the healing powers of the medicines prescribed by the physician for his suffering frame. What proportion is to be observed in the share of efficacy allotted to each it is not easy to determine, since they were administered so very nearly at the same time; but certain it is, that from this moment our apprehensions began to subside, and hope every day smiled more and more upon us.

With Walter the effect was exactly what all who knew him thoroughly might reasonably expect. The impressions made upon his mind by the idea that he had occasioned his father's illness subsided with the illness itself; and his eagerness to convert his favourite amusement

into his regular occupation returned with redoubled force. Nothing therefore remained but to yield to it; and it was soon determined that his entering upon the study should only be delayed till Mr. and Mrs. Shelburne were settled in London, and could receive him as their inmate.

My removal was not delayed so long. My wishes were no sooner made known to Mrs. Carberry than she communicated them to her husband, who readily engaged to take me into his service; and it was determined that I should accompany Mrs. Carberry at her return to London. Mr. Shelburne stayed at Langham only till he saw such an amendment in his brother-in-law as left no further ground of apprehension for his life; but as he was still in a debilitated state, and wanted much nursing and attention for some time, he proposed that when Mrs. Carberry should be obliged to leave him, Mrs. Shelburne and her two daughters should supply her place, and remain at the rectory till the house in London was ready for their reception. This plan was so perfectly satisfactory to all parties, that it was easily agreed upon; and after a month's stay, Mrs. Carberry and I departed together, Mrs. Shelburne and her two daughters being expected the next day.

CHAPTER IV.

Conversation upon conversation.—Advice upon advice.—Pros and cons respecting marriage.—More aërial architecture.

Before I quitted Langham, I had several very interesting conversations with the worthy rector. As soon as the final arrangement with regard to Walter was determined on, it was imparted to me both by the father and the son. "It is an inexpressible relief to my mind," said the former, when he acquainted me with it, "that since this must be so, Walter will have such an advantage as his uncle's house for his residence. I own that the necessity of his living in London has not been one of my least forcible objections to his engaging in this profession. Not that I coincide with the opinion held by many people, that vice is exclusively the lot of large towns, or virtue that of retired villages. I have found characters in London, notwithstanding the scenes of dissipation and depravity with which it abounds, of as solid and much more active virtue than in the most remote country village;—while I have known very vicious and profligate characters amid those secluded scenes, where no one ever thought of singing, dancing, or playing at cards, and

and where no such thing as a play or an opera was ever heard of. Still I think, that amid the scenes of temptation held out to the young and inexperienced in such an enormous capital, and amid the endless variety of characters to be found there, a young man, unless he have very great resolution and firmness of mind, is in imminent danger of being led astray; and it is with heart-felt grief I must confess, what I cannot but see, that nobody is more in danger of being led astray than my poor boy.

"His being an inmate in a regular family may do much towards restraining his thoughtless disposition within some bounds; and I cannot say how deeply I feel my obligations to my brother and sister for taking upon themselves such a charge. The obligation is the greater, since my state of health precludes the possibility not only of having him now regularly under my own eye, but even for a long time at least of visiting London, to see how he is going on. In this respect, however thankful to Heaven that my life is spared on any terms, I still feel myself, as it were, dead to him. But I am perhaps to blame in uttering a word which may appear like repining, when I have so much cause for thankfulness; for I will own to you, my dear Samuel, that I feel it scarcely a less cause for thankfulness to Heaven that you will,

be resident in London. I venture to say this to you without disguise or reserve; because I feel so perfectly assured of the integrity of your mind, that I have no fear of your abusing any confidence placed in you. I have said before, how much I think it in the power of a steady young friend to assist in regulating Walter's conduct; and I rejoice in the idea of his having such a friend in you, with whom he can associate not only without danger, but with advantage. Be it yours, my child, to keep him as much as possible from such society as may mislead him, to teach him to distinguish the good from the bad. He will not consider your advice and admonitions as the sourness of age; and without some one to warn him of his danger, he is very liable to be entangled unawares in society alike destructive of his morals and of his happiness.

"Thus much, my young friend, I could not help saying with regard to my poor child; and now there is a very essential point on which I would gladly counsel both him and you. To you I dare mention it without hesitation. I know not whether I shall venture to mention it to Walter, as I have frequently seen that a caution upon the subject has rather contributed towards bringing on the evil than preventing it:—some judgement must therefore be exercised

in discerning to whom such a caution may be safely given. Beware how you entangle yourself in a matrimonial connection, before you are in a situation to maintain a wife and family creditably. Nothing embarrasses a young man while on the road to fortune, so grievously as being thus entangled. Even if he have prudence sufficient to wait for the completion of his engagement till he is comfortably established, still the merely being involved in one commonly unsettles him, makes him restless and uneasy, and hinders his advancement from the very desire which it creates to accelerate it. If he have not the resolution to defer his marriage till his fortune is made, then his situation is far worse; and while he has created himself greater calls than ever for the exertion of his industry, he has thrown obstacles almost insurmountable in the way of its being exerted.

"Do not suppose me here speaking against marriage;—I think it, on the contrary, a very desirable thing for a young man to unite himself with a prudent and amiable companion, as soon as he has the means of offering her a comfortable establishment. But a man shows very little real regard for a woman, when he seeks to make her his wife before he has a suitable establishment to offer her:—he then only acts from a selfish idea of gratification to himself.

And even in this idea he is deceived. When he finds himself fettered and embarrassed in a thousand ways by the yoke into which he has so imprudently thrust his neck, he soon ceases to regard with affection the object for which all this embarrassment has been incurred;—it is well if she do not become the object of his positive aversion;—while she can scarcely avoid experiencing similar feelings towards him. It is an old and trite saying, but not the less true, that *when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.*

"And even when the means are sufficient to allow of marrying with prudence, the choice of a wife is a very important and arduous concern. If a young man makes a prudent choice, a wife may, even after a husband has arrived at a considerable degree of prosperity in his affairs, assist materially towards their still more rapid advancement. A woman who is prudent and clever in management may promote her husband's interests in a variety of ways that do not come strictly within what is considered as the woman's department. It is therefore of very great importance to a man in such a situation, to select as his chosen helpmate a woman who has been educated to find resources within herself, who may know how to act for herself under any circumstances in which she may

be placed, who will not be at a loss whether she ought to turn to the right or to the left, if she have not her husband always by her side to direct her.

"I do not think that the prevalent mode of educating young women at this time is peculiarly adapted to the formation of such wives as I would recommend; yet I believe nevertheless that some such are still to be found, if the young men would take the trouble of *searching* for them. But it is one of the misfortunes of these days, that instead of young men *searching for wives*, it is left to the young women to *search for husbands* :—it is the ladies now who court, not the gentlemen; and the latter expect so much to be courted, that instead of considering, as in former times, what sort of a wife such or such a woman would make, and when their choice is decided making their advances in due form;—instead of this they wait till pretty strong advances have been made to them, before they even think of meeting them half way. But it is not among the ladies who are so obliging as to save our sex the trouble of courtship, and take it upon themselves, that the best wives are to be found. A woman who really feels the true dignity of the female character will remain unwedded for ever, rather than be the first to

make advances; to be obtained she must be *sought* for, but the *search* will be amply repaid; when found it will appear that she is the grain of pure gold, though it was not immediately to be discerned amid the mass of surrounding dross.

"Think not then, my dear Samuel, if you would be happily married, of being spared the trouble of courtship: look carefully about you, and while you are acquiring the means of maintaining a wife, you will have leisure to examine the characters of the young women with whom you are acquainted. Distrust above all things the designs of those fathers and mothers, who having many daughters appear anxious to draw young men continually to their houses. Such young women are generally educated with no other idea than that of *getting husbands*, as the phrase is; that is, they have a smattering given them of a few showy accomplishments, and are taught to study dress, and the art of setting off their persons to the best advantage, as the most important avocations of female life. This is no less the case with women in the station of life in which you may look for a wife, than with those in the higher classes; for the vices and follies of the great are always imitated in regular gradation, by all the descending ranks in society. While

the duchess spares no pains to set off her daughters so as to catch the hearts of the dukes and marquises,—while all her larger artillery is played off in the West to take them by storm,—the merchant's wife keeps up a no less assiduous fire with her small arms upon her mercantile neighbours in the East.

"Let me not here be understood, however, to throw an indiscriminate censure on either class. Among the nobility of the country, notwithstanding the too general relaxation of manners and morals, there may still be found mothers who may be held out as patterns in the discharge of the maternal duties, and whose daughters are educated rather with the idea of seeking the approbation of their God, than the admiration of thoughtless man. And it is the same with the inferior classes:—there are still many among the mercantile part of the community, whose daughters are educated to be notable in the management of their family concerns, and to be rather characters of solid worth than of outside show. But these are not the houses, Samuel, where your acquaintance will be the most eagerly sought. Where daughters are thus educated, the father and mother like to know the character, connections, and occupations of a young man, before he is received as a visitor in their family. They

will be rather disposed to keep you at a distance than to court your intimacy, and only when they know you thoroughly, and are convinced of your good qualities, will permit your visiting at their houses on sociable terms. The acquaintance of one such family is however worth a dozen of those who solicit your company earnestly, without any knowledge of who or what you are ;—'tis from the bosom of such a family that you have the best chance of drawing a prize in the lottery of matrimony. These hints I venture to throw out, it is for your own good sense to apply and improve upon them. Justly do we term marriage a change of condition ;—it is a change indeed ;—it is the commencement of a total revolution, I may almost call it, in all our habits and manners, almost in all our ideas ;—the world seems at that moment to assume a new aspect to us.

"Samuel, it is by no means my intention to ask you to undertake the odious office of a spy about my son. I am not actuated in what I would request of you, by a mean desire of knowing every little act of youthful folly of which he may be guilty. I know that such things must be expected ;—'tis unnatural that youth should not sometimes run into trifling follies, and the less a parent knows of them the better; the youth does not always turn

out the worse man for these things, if he have only discretion not to go too far. But, Samuel, I must earnestly entreat of you to let your attention be particularly directed towards the female society into which my poor boy may be drawn. I do not mean to speak of that unhappy profligate part of the female sex which every father must wish his child to shun, but of that description of young women against which I have been warning you, who are upon the look-out for husbands. Walter is very likely to be entangled in an affair of this kind; you will be more in the way of knowing what acquaintance he makes that may endanger his being led into one, than even his uncle, and you cannot show him an act of more solid and essential kindness than by endeavouring to draw him gently away, if you see him in danger. Ah, Samuel! the very thoughtlessness of character which renders him wholly unfit for the important situation of a husband and a father, is the thing most likely to make him rush headlong into it."

Such were some among a variety of observations and instructions, given me by this truly excellent man, for the regulation of my conduct upon launching into the world, as well in the higher branches of religion and morality, as in the more minute concerns of life. How

far I profited by them it remains for the sequel to show.

My father too was incessantly occupied in speculations upon my future fate and fortune. That he was exceedingly anxious to see me a good man there can be no reason to doubt, but his speculations turned rather more upon my future *greatness* than *goodness*. I must here do him the justice to say, that though he found it difficult at first to reconcile his mind to my abandoning the church, yet the thing once settled, he never after reproached me with the disappointment I had occasioned him. He was not a little flattered and gratified when he heard that I was to accompany Mrs. Carberry to town in her own carriage, and the coal-wharf seemed from that moment to assume a more cheering aspect in his eyes. It was this, I believe, that first led him seriously to speculate upon the possible effects that might arise from a situation which he had at first been disposed rather to regard with contempt.

The idea of my being archbishop of Canterbury must, it was clear, be entirely abandoned; but that was not the only post of honour which the country had to offer as a lure to aspiring genius. Were there not honours equally worthy of ambition, perhaps even more distinguished, to which the coal-

trade might lead?—Most undoubtedly there were.—And here his sanguine temper, which was always active in the formation of projects, soon began to erect a new fabric of greatness, which indeed, if somewhat visionary, was certainly founded on a less airy base than when he had placed me on the archiepiscopal throne. He saw me, before I had been many years in Mr. Carberry's service, the possessor of a handsome capital, the result of my own industry and savings, with which I was enabled to enter into business for myself, and to have ships and wharfs of my own;—then I became a great man in the City, till ascending by all proper gradations I arrived at last at the *ne plus ultra* of city honours, and was elected lord mayor of London.

To this idea succeeded in natural rotation that of the fine coach in which I was to ride; —for my father had once been in London for a week at Easter, to see me walk in the procession of the blue-coat children on Easter Tuesday, when, of course, he had also seen the lord mayor's coach. The prospect of my riding in this same coach, while the pedestrian train of boys of which I had once formed a part were pacing through the dirt before it, soon fired his imagination to such a degree, that he began to think he had hitherto been

totally mistaken in all his notions, and made a very erroneous estimate as to the comparative grandeur of the different situations to which in idea he had raised me. The archbishop of Canterbury and the king's physician might be great people; but what were they to the lord mayor of London, the first magistrate of the first city in the world?—for such he held London to be most indisputably.—Lambeth palace was not half so grand as the mansion-house; and as to the coach that the archbishop rides in,—pooh!—that was mere trumpery compared with the lord mayor's. For what he could see, indeed, there was no such mighty difference between that and the coach that his most gracious majesty himself goes in to the parliament-house;—the king's might be something finer; but excepting that, he was sure he hadn't seen one in all London half so fine, no nor a quarter neither, as the lord mayor's.

Then if during my year of mayoralty any thing extraordinary should happen, so that we should take an island or two, or some such thing, which then to-be sure there would be an address to be presented to his majesty, and nigh hand his majesty would then be graciously pleased to confer on me the honour of knighthood, and that would be something; which then he would perhaps be pleased after-

wards to extend his gracious goodness so far as to make me a baronet. That would be noble indeed!—quite as good as if I had studied physic, and been made king's physician. And after all he didn't see why it wouldn't be just as well, aye and better too, to be made a baronet than a bishop. A bishop indeed is called *My lord*, which to be sure that is greater than *Sir Samuel*, but then a man's family is ne'er a whit the better for that after he is gone:—but if he's made a baronet, though it can't quite be said that it's as well to be called *Sir Samuel* as *My lord*, yet that goes to his children after him, which that is much greater.—In short, he discovered by this process of methodizing his ideas, that I might be the founder of a line of baronets, I could never secure being the founder of a line of bishops, and drawing a just inference decided, that after all matters were fairly and duly balanced, a baronetage with descent was to be preferred to a bishopric, or even an archbishopric, without it.

The discussion of these interesting questions occupied us for the remaining evenings of my stay at Langham; and the honours to which the coal-trade might ultimately lead, were so prevalent in his mind when I took my leave of him, as well as his delight so great at what they had already acquired me in going to town

with Mrs. Carberry in her own carriage, that he grasped my hands with the utmost eagerness, and giving me a hearty kiss, "God bless you for ever!" he said again and again, "my dear Sam, and continue to make you as good a man as you have been a boy!—And depend upon it, if it does but please him to spare me till you are made lord mayor, I'll come up to London on purpose to see you riding in your fine coach."

CHAPTER V.

Old scenes revisited with new delight.—Description of an unfashionable female.—Severe trials of youthful patience.—Early sensations not altered by time.—A new purchase.—Different studies pursued by different classes at the university.—Some parents not so quicksighted as others.—A new family introduced on the tapis.—Consummate happiness.

I NEVER experienced, I think, greater delight than when I found myself once more in Chatham Place, and reflected that I had changed the dullness and monotony of the life I led at college, for society which was become altogether as delightful to me, as that which I once thought never could have been rivalled in my estimation, the society I enjoyed at Langham. Indeed the partiality which I had for both, seemed but the same sentiment; it was from similar associations that the pleasure I enjoyed in both arose. As I alighted from the carriage a: d entered the house with Mrs. Carberry, the world seemed to wear a smiling cheering aspect to me, which I had looked for in vain amid my solitary rambles upon the banks of the Cam:—I seemed called into a new existence, a kind of tranquil delight seemed to

have entire possession of me;—I could fancy it an assurance, as it were, of all, and even more than the flattering prospects of which according to my ideas my new situation gave a promise, being realised. But above all things, what opened to me the greatest prospect of delight was the hope, the confidence, that the social hours which had been so often devoted by Katherine and myself reciprocally to giving and receiving instruction would be renewed; and these were moments which had been a source of so much enjoyment to me, that it was impossible not to feel a more than common degree of satisfaction in the prospect that the interruption they had experienced was at an end.

Katherine was now in her nineteenth year. In her person she was rather above than below the middle size, well made, with a countenance which, if not strictly and critically handsome, was yet extremely pleasing and interesting, from being sensible and animated, and from having an expression of perfect good-nature and benevolence. Few young women of her age were perhaps endowed with the variety of attainments which she could boast. Educated entirely by her mother till she was more than thirteen years of age, she had by her been instructed from her infancy, as well

in those domestic attainments which she had herself been obliged first to learn when they ought to have been called into practice, as in other branches of female education which are rather ornamental than useful. There was no part of the management of a family with which she was not thoroughly well acquainted; she was an excellent accountant; she was a perfect mistress of all kinds of useful needle-work, and had a competent knowledge of many kinds which are rather considered as matters of amusement. Having an exceedingly good ear for music, and a fine voice, she had profited so well by the instructions she received from her mother, that she could even at the time of the latter's marriage sing very pleasingly; and having since received lessons from an excellent master, she was now, for an amateur only, an exceedingly good singer: this talent was however reserved chiefly for the entertainment of her own family, or extended only to the gratification of intimate friends; she was never allowed to make it a matter of display in large and mixed companies.

Her love of reading and desire of acquiring knowledge was, even though now at an age when the female mind is generally much rather occupied by more frivolous pursuits, with her a constantly increasing passion. She was ac-

quainted with foreign and English literature to an extent far beyond what generally comes within the scope of female reading. She was extremely well versed in history, ancient as well as modern, and perfectly conversant with those fabulous legends of antiquity which form the basis of all the ancient poetry, and are an inexhaustible fund of illustration and ornament to the modern; besides which she was an adept in geography, and had read all the best voyages and travels. All this knowledge however was acqu red from the innate pleasure she found in its acquisition, not from a desire of displaying it. Though she never was negligent of her proper feminine occupations, and was always neat and well dressed, without appearing to pay a slavish attention to setting off her person, it was evident that she had more real pleasure in a new book than in a new ornament.

Yet while she never was eager to obtrude any of her various attainments into observation, she was equally free from the absurdity of affecting to keep them studiously concealed: as they were not sought, so neither were they suppressed, from motives of vanity. I express myself thus, because I think there is often as much vanity, there certainly is as much affectation, in seeking to conceal, as in being very

anxious to display our attainments. If a woman thinks any of the acquirements she possesses improper for a female, or inconsistent with the modesty and retiredness of the female character, why has she sought them?—and if they are not improper, that must be a mistaken feeling which endeavours cautiously to conceal them. It was indeed impossible to find a mind more entirely free from vanity and affectation than Katherine's. That amiable and delightful simplicity of heart, which has no idea of wishing to appear any thing but what it really is, was her most distinguishing characteristic, and perhaps to persons of real taste and discernment there is no trait of character more truly amiable and delightful. To her it seemed so perfectly natural to join in the conversation when it turned upon any subject on which she felt herself well-informed, that she would always take her part in it with perfect ease, and without any mixture of pedantry. I would here be understood to speak only of the period when she was arrived at such an age that a young woman may reasonably be expected to *make one of the company*, according to the familiar mode of expression;—for I would by all means deprecate the idea of intending to represent her as improperly forward, or disposed to obtrude her opinions at a time of life

when from real diffidence, not from affectation, a female may be *allowed* to feel,—when it is even more becoming that she should feel,—some apprehension of entering into general conversation.

Her father-in-law was excessively fond of her, and she was studious to return with gratitude the kindness she uniformly received from him. Sometimes, if he had been particularly engaged in business all the day, so that he was rather fatigued when he joined his family in the evening,—as he, notwithstanding, could not forgo a ride upon his favourite hobby-horse, he would employ her to read the newspaper to him. It was admirable on such occasions to see with what consummate patience and good-nature she went through this ceremony; and it must be confessed that it was no little trial of patience to a young person. It was so impossible for our politician to refrain from long animadversions upon the various interesting topics of which the paper treated, that he was perpetually interrupting her, and she would perhaps be obliged to lie to for nearly half an hour, while he fought a battle, or made a speech in the house. All this time she was kept from doing any thing,—she could only listen to him till desired to proceed;—and in this way she was sometimes

detained two long hours. But whatever might be her feelings, and it was scarcely possible that she should not be a little *impatienté*, she never suffered an expression or even a movement of impatience to escape her; she saw that this was only the foible of an essentially worthy character, and felt it her duty to bear with it, sensible that in the very best characters some foible must be expected. Nor was this forbearance without its reward; there was no reasonable indulgence in which she did not find herself gratified through the kindness of Mr. Carberry. Besides receiving a handsome stated allowance from him for her private expenses, he often made her presents even of some value, and was always desirous that she should partake of as much amusement as her mother judged proper for her age and situation.

Edward Carberry was now a fine boy between four and five years old, and Sophia a lovely infant near three. Edward was the pupil of Katherine, and under her instruction had made a very great progress in his learning considering his age. The deportment of Count Maurice to his little brother and sister was in general very stately, but at times he would be somewhat more gracious and condescending; —in his most gracious moments he would even

relax so far as to take Sophia upon his knee and give her a kiss, or promise Edward that when he was old enough he should be his little jockey.

Katherine had not grown more fond of him since the marriage of their respective parents, than she had been while he was an occasional visitor at her mother's house at Wandsworth during her widowhood. At first when she became a resident in Chatham Place, she had as studiously embraced all opportunities presented, of contradicting and crossing him, as in our walk upon my first introduction to him. But on a hint from her mother,—and a hint on Mrs. Carberry's part was always sufficient to correct any thing she wished otherwise in her, —on a hint that it was not right to show such a disposition towards any body, and particularly wrong, considering Mr. Carberry's extreme kindness to her, to evince any dislike to his son, she desisted from these open manifestations of her feelings, though she could not resist the same disinclination towards him in her heart:—perhaps no people could dislike each other more cordially than she and Count Maurice did, unless it was Count Maurice and myself. She would, however, every now and then in private to me give a little vent to her

dislike, and she always found me ready to join in it most heartily.

Mr. Carberry, constantly keeping in view the idea of his son's coming into parliament, thought it proper that he should have a qualification of his own, even sufficient for his being a candidate to represent a county, if a favourable prospect should present itself of aspiring to so high an honour; and he had therefore been for some time looking out for a purchase of land which would answer his purpose. He besides wished to have a permanent habitation at no great distance from London, whither he might go whenever he was inclined, rather than to continue hiring a house or going to some place on the coast for a part of the summer, as he had hitherto done. This twofold object was now recently attained by the purchase of New Lodge, a very pretty house and estate in the neighbourhood of Tunbridge Wells. Here the family had passed the preceding summer. It was from this retreat that Mrs. Carberry came to attend upon her brother in his illness; and here, for the first time, the whole care and direction of the house had fallen upon Katherine. In this new situation she had acquitted herself entirely to the satisfaction of her mother and her father-in-law. It had been Mr. Carberry's intention to remain in the

country two months longer, but unexpected business occasioned his removing so early in the autumn to town.

As for Maurice himself, he had now passed his minority, and was arrived at the full age for becoming a member of the legislative body of these united kingdoms. At the age of eighteen he was removed from the school where so happy a foundation had been laid for his future greatness in the diplomatic line; and was placed, for the completion of his education, as a fellow-commoner at St. John's college, Cambridge. This college was chosen for the same reason that the school had been—because Mr. Carberry understood it to be an excellent one for the perfecting youths of fortune and distinction in the acquirements proper to form a finished gentleman and statesman; and as this information came from the tutor of the college himself, there could be no doubt of its accuracy.

What the count's attainments were in those branches of knowledge, which, to judge from the conduct of the golden-robed sons of Alma Mater,—from the very inferior consideration in which they seem regarded by them,—are to be called the *minor* ones among the studies pursued by this class of students, viz. the mathematics, classics, &c. &c.—what his attainments

in these *minor* branches of knowledge were, was soon to be put to the test, as the time was now fast approaching when he was to take his bachelor-of-arts degree. It must be confessed, however, that no great expectations were formed of the progress he would be found to have made in them. To make amends, his attainments in all those more important branches of knowledge which have any relation to the noble science of *buckism*,—and the character of a buck is one which it is much more essential for a fellow-commoner to sustain with propriety during his pupilage at Cambridge, than that of a scholar,—in these branches of knowledge his attainments were unquestionable; and had it been in them that he was to undergo the examination for his degree, no doubt could have been entertained of very high honours being conferred upon him.

Of his proficiency in the one description of studies, and deficiency in the other, I had an opportunity of informing myself pretty fully during my year's residence at Cambridge. Not that I was of the same college with him, for I was of Pembroke Hall: but Maurice had contrived to get himself enlisted among a set, at that time of great notoriety in the university, whose feats in the science of which they were the professed votaries, had more than once be-

come the subject of animadversion among the senior part of their respective colleges; and but that they were considered as belonging to a sort of privileged order, the animadversions would probably have diverged into censures. Be all this however as it may, Maurice was a person of so much notoriety, that I could not avoid hearing of him. As to any thing like accquaintance being kept up between us, that was entirely out of the question: it was much that in his father's house he could condescend to salute the son of a blacksmith with a good-morning or a good-night; any where else so great a condescension could not reasonably be expected; and as it was matter of perfect indifference to me whether I was honoured with his notice or not, so if by chance we ever met in the street, we,—it seemed as if by mutual accord,—passed as though we had been total strangers.

But it was Maurice's misfortune that his college no less than his school accquaintance were confined to the precincts where they originated. As the *set* with whom he was associated at Cambridge were most of them youths of fashion, none, like himself, persons whose fathers were indebted to horrid trade alone, for the fortune which enabled them to decorate the persons of their sons with gold

embroidery upon their gowns; so the living in Chatham Place was an insuperable stumbling-block to the same intimacy being kept up with the young merchant while under his father's roof, as when in his elegantly furnished rooms at St. John's college. At Cambridge, since he spent his money freely, and had every thing about him in the first style, he was a very proper associate for them: he might be a man of fashion, his name of Carberry indeed was sufficient to authorize the belief that he was so; and since he dashed away, and supported his character for notoriety upon a level with the most fashionable among them, all was well, there was no reason to shrink from his acquaintance. But there was all the difference possible when he was in London, and known to live in Chatham Place, a part of the metropolis which indicated at once that he must be connected with trade. While at home, therefore, the poor count was obliged to content himself with being at the head of a society of City dashers, who played off in New-Bridge-street and its environs the airs of Bond-street in as high a style as the best among the bucks of Bond-street themselves. As to the Earl of Borrowdale, unfortunately his education was finished at Oxford, not at Cambridge, so that the intimacy formed at school between him and

the count could not be renewed at the university; and but for a very fortunate accident which intervened a short time after, and which will be related in its proper place, it seemed in some danger of falling entirely to the ground.

Mr. Carberry was not like Mr. Armstrong with regard to his son, only the more quick-sighted to his faults in proportion as he was anxious to see him as faultless as could be expected in a being purely human. He knew that he was extravagant, he might have seen that he was vain and conceited to excess; but he said that young men must be a little wild, and many that had been very much so in their youth had notwithstanding afterwards become celebrated parliamentary speakers. He therefore thought there was every reason to hope that when Maurice quitted college, and his attention should be entirely turned to coming into parliament, his irregularities would be corrected, and he would apply himself to business so as to become useful to his country, and an ornament to the body of which he was a member.

Such was the situation of Mr. Carberry's family when I entered into his service. Desirous of doing every thing possible to oblige his wife, and knowing how much she interested

herself for me, he had arranged matters so that I was not only to be employed as a clerk, but was to reside entirely at the wharf. This he had done from the consideration that I should then be constantly under the eye of the superintendant there, who was a very worthy honest man, and he thought that there would be less danger of my steadiness being perverted, than if I were thrown loose at the hours when I was not occupied with my business upon the dissipated world of London. He therefore fitted up two rooms for me in a building in the coal-yard, which he furnished very neatly at his own expense, and engaged the superintendant to let me board with him. Here I soon established myself very comfortably with my books, my implements for drawing, and other sources of amusement about me.

Mr. Fenton was now between fifty and sixty years of age, and had been near forty years, first in the service of Mr. Carberry's father, and then of Mr. Carberry himself; the last twenty he had been superintendant at the wharf in Thames-street. Soon after he arrived at that post he married, and had now two daughters of the ages of eighteen and sixteen. He had saved up so much money that these young ladies were considered as likely to have fortunes of five or six thousand pounds each;

consequently they must be very desirable matches for a young man going into business. The parents besides prided themselves upon having given their daughters a very genteel education, so that they considered them in that respect as fit matches for any body. Mr. Fenton was a man of good plain sense, and could converse very well in a plain way; so that I found his society by no means unpleasant. Mrs. Fenton was a kind-hearted notable woman, only rather too full of her own importance, and too fond of showing the vast opinion she had of the attractions of her daughters in every way, whether as to their personal beauty, and taste in dress, as to their accomplishments, or as to their fortunes.

I had a general invitation to take my Sunday dinner whenever I liked in Chatham Place, and my likings seldom failed to carry me thither every Sunday. On these occasions, Katherine and I, as I had flattered myself, always employed a part of the time in reading together, either Latin, Greek, French, or Italian; and this was always to me the most gratifying part of my visit. Not that I was insensible to the many other reasons which I had to delight in the hours that I passed under this hospitable roof. I admired Mrs. Carberry exceedingly, and thought myself particularly honoured in the notice she took of me, espe-

cially as she would always converse with me upon the most sociable footing, as if I had been on a perfect equality with herself both as to age and situation,—not with the distance often assumed, when a person of her years condescends to make a companion of one so much younger. I was besides very fond of children, and had great delight in playing with Edward and Sophia, and doing many little things to amuse them. Edward was a great scholar for his age, and was not a little proud of coming to read to me, and showing what progress he made in his learning from week to week. Still the most delightful part of my visits was the reading with Katherine; and though she was now exactly at the age when vanity and a thirst of admiration are too often the prevailing passions of the female mind, yet she retained in their fullest extent those unaffected, unassuming manners which had always rendered her so amiable in my eyes;—which had always led her to overlook in me the inferiority of my birth and situation, and to think only of the mutual advantages we might derive from this kind of intercourse. Thus situated I felt as if I had nothing more to wish for,—as if nothing was wanting to me,—nor for the first three months did any thing intervene to cast the smallest damp upon the happiness I enjoyed.

CHAPTER VI.

Interruptions of happiness.—Family affection.—Modest efforts of aspiring genius.—Fine subjects for painting.—Ardent love.

THE first thing which occasioned any interruption to my happiness was the thing which it might rather be supposed would be that of all others to increase it, if possible;—the arrival of Walter in London. But to this event I had always looked forward with mingled sensations of pleasure and apprehension. While I felt that his society would be a source of great delight to me, I felt no less the extreme difficulty, perhaps impossibility, of acquitting myself to my own satisfaction of the important charge laid upon me by my excellent benefactor. The disposition which he had engaged me to watch over was such, that even the utmost assiduity on my part might be wholly powerless to render myself of the service I wished; and I saw plainly that blame might very possibly appear to attach to me, where no blame was really due;—that I might be liable to the suspicion of having been wanting in vigilance, when nothing within the compass of my abilities could have prevented the evil.

From the situation in which the family of Armstrong were left at the death of their father, it was almost impossible that they should be united in any general bond of friendship; and accordingly very little intercourse had since subsisted between the head and the junior branches of it. The squire could not help feeling it a sort of reflection upon himself, that the poor curate should have undertaken the care and protection of his sisters, since conscience whispered that, considering the fortune which had devolved to him, that ought rather to have been his province. This feeling almost inevitably occasioned a coldness and distance in his conduct towards both the brother and the sisters; since, every time that he saw or heard of them, he was involuntarily compelled to advert in his mind to circumstances which he rather wished to forget. Without any positive quarrel, therefore, very little was known by each of these respective divisions of the family, of what was passing in the other; no regular interchange of letters was kept up; it was only in the case of any particular family occurrence, that even an epistolary communication took place between them;—to ask his sisters, or his brother Bernard, to his house, was an act of civility which never seemed to enter into the squire's head.

The marriage, first of Mrs. Shelburne, and afterwards of Eleanor and her brother, were among the events that occasioned letters to be dispatched from the rectory at Langham to the hall at Winstanton. On both occasions they only called forth angry replies, containing severe animadversions upon the little regard shown to the family, ancient and distinguished as it was, by contracting alliances so much beneath it; and the intercourse between the parties would perhaps in consequence have been further lessened, if that had been possible without a formal notification that it was to cease entirely. The second brother, who before the father's death went out a trader to India, having married there imprudently, had involved himself in great difficulties, by which he had for some years been much embarrassed; but at length losing his wife and not having any family, his affairs began to wear a more promising aspect, and the latter accounts received of him had been of a somewhat pleasanter nature. He had therefore become less shy than before of writing to his friends in England; and his brother Bernard in particular, of whom he was extremely fond before he went abroad, had within a short time received two very gratifying letters from him.

But the friendship between Mrs. Shelburne, Mrs. Carberry, and the worthy rector of Langham had continued uninterrupted; and it was with no small pleasure that the two sisters, after having been separated for so many years, now saw a prospect of being reunited by the removal of Mr. and Mrs. Shelburne to London. After passing three months at Langham, the latter with her two daughters rejoined Mr. Shelburne about Christmas, at a house which he had purchased in Lincoln's Inn Fields, bringing with them my friend Walter, with a view to his commencing his studies as a painter.

Faithful to our long established friendship, unlike that which subsisted between the Earl of Borrowdale and Maurice Carberry, Walter's first anxiety when he came to town was to see me; and by his aunt Carberry's invitation, the next day being Sunday, we met at her house. Even in this interview my troubles commenced; for we had scarcely shaken hands and expressed our mutual satisfaction at seeing each other, when, even before I could introduce an inquiry into the state of his worthy father's health, he imparted to me, in the confidence of friendship, that he had fallen desperately in love with his cousin Margaret Shelburne.

"Heavens, Sam!" said he, "you never saw such beauty!—such a form!—such symmetry!—such majesty!

Grace is in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.

"Even your frigid heart, I think, could not behold her unmoved; and since I am disposed to be desperately jealous, it is not quite certain that I shall let you see her. And yet I do not in my conscience think that there could be much risk in it: for, notwithstanding that I love you very sincerely myself, and know that you have a thousand and a thousand good qualities, which make you worthy of being loved, and, what is much more valuable, of being no less highly esteemed, yet I cannot for the soul of me flatter you so far as to conceive that you will ever be a dangerous man among the fair sex. And yet the women are such strange eccentric kind of animals, and take such very extraordinary fancies into their heads, that there is no answering for consequences;—so that upon the whole, the *pros* and *cons* well weighed, I think the safest mode of proceeding will be to keep you entirely out of her way. I shall therefore invent some story to tell uncle Shelburne, by which he may understand, that in spite of your sanctified

appearance you are not a man to be trusted among young women, and so prevent his asking you to his house, as I know to be his intention at present."

"I am exceedingly obliged to you; but since I have a great respect for your uncle Shelburne, and an extreme desire to be acquainted with your aunt, I will readily excuse your putting so heavy a tax upon your invention."

"My uncle and my aunt!—And so it is to them alone you so much wish to be introduced?—not a spark of desire to see the lovely Margaret, notwithstanding the highly wrought description of her charms with which you have been presented? But do not suppose me, my good sanctified Mr. Steady, the dupe of this seeming indifference;—I am sure 'tis all hypocrisy,—all a feint to throw me off my guard, and induce me to abandon my scheme of preventing your introduction:—but I am not so easily deceived,—I am sure you must be all on fire to see the dear girl."

"Trust me, I am not. In the first place, I am really not of an inflammable nature;—in the next place, I am not insensible to the presumption of which I should be guilty in aspiring to the notice of one so much above me;—and in the third place, as I am firmly resolved never

to marry till I can do so with prudence, I let my eyes wander at large, but shall take care that they do not fix hastily upon any one. My firm and unalterable determination is, never to think of marrying till I have the means of offering a comfortable establishment to a wife, and even then my eyes will not be much consulted in the choice I shall make;—they will only be suffered to come in with a by vote, when my judgement has pronounced a favourable verdict."

"My dear sage sir, I am your most obedient humble servant, but I do not intend to treat my eyes so ungraciously. I shall never solicit the interference of my judgement till my eyes have given a decidedly favourable opinion; and even then, if judgement should presume to set himself up in opposition to eyes, I shall most likely give him a peremptory dismissal, as an impertinent intruder."

"I hope you do not expect me to compliment very highly the wisdom of this determination?"

"As you please. Wisdom you know was never the goddess of my idolatry;—I always fought on the side of Venus and the Trojans, in opposition to Minerva and her Greeks."

"At least I hope you do not intend to

marry Margaret before you know whether s.
will have you or not?"

"Just so far my prudence could go, b
not one step further. However, as to that matter, I have no occasion to make myself uneasy, since I am well convinced that our attachment is mutual."

"You have then already opened your mind to her?"

"Only with my eyes,—but I'm sure she understands me."

"That is all very delightful.—But how are you sure that she is pleased with what she understands, and means you to understand that her heart is inspired with responsive sentiments?"

"By the most infallible of all vouchers:

.... O! from her eyes
I have received fair speechless messages,

in answer to those which mine have dispatched to her, that leave no doubt upon the subject;—they are warrants unquestionable that I cannot be mistaken."

"I presume, however, that you have no thoughts of proceeding at present to any declaration more explicit;—that you do not mean to inflict upon yourself the arduous task

f becoming a husband before you are possess- of the means of maintaining a wife and fa- ..ily?"

"*Inflict* upon myself!—O prudence! prudence! what a barbarous mode of expression! what an insult upon the loveliest part of this fair creation!—frozen fourscore itself could scarcely have applied a term more derogatory to the sacred warmth that animates and inspires the breast of youth. But know, Sir Prudence, that if I had a wife at this moment, far from being an incumbrance upon me, I should feel it only a spur to my industry."

"A spur, however, by which I should be extremely sorry to see it goaded under your present circumstances.—But, à-propos of industry, is painting still as much in favour as ever?"

"How came you to ask that question?—for question implies doubt, and I cannot think how any doubts upon this point could enter your head."

"Every thing may be doubted till we see it reduced to absolute certainty."

"But this has so much the appearance of divination!—for, to own the whole truth, Sam, I am somewhat cooled upon the subject."

"Ha!—and how comes that?"

"Why, it comes from this circumstance: I have long thought that the description of

Melancholy, as given by our divine poet Milton in his Penseroso, was an uncommonly fine subject for painting:

> Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
> Sober, steadfast, and demure;
> All in robe of darkest grain
> Flowing with majestic train,
> And sable stole of cypress lawn
> O'er thy decent shoulders drawn:
> Come, but keep thy wonted state
> With even step and musing gait,
> And looks commercing with the skies,
> Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes.

"And seeing Margaret every thing that one could wish as a model for such a figure, I thought that so favourable an opportunity of describing on canvass the sublime ideas of the poet was not to be passed over, and requested of her to sit to me for the purpose."

"I must own that the attempt was a modest and humble one for a novice in painting."

"I suppose, then, you would equally consult your judgement, and not your fancy, in selecting a subject for painting, as in choosing a wife?"

"I do not know that the subject would therefore be the worse chosen."

"Here again we differ essentially, since I am no less disposed to let fancy take the lead in the choice of both."

"Well, my good votary of fancy, and the result?—Margaret, I suppose, was not reluctant to your wishes?"

"Far from it; nothing could be more obliging than her ready compliance with them. The important task was therefore begun.—O Sam! as I contemplated with a painter's eye that enchanting form, those exquisite features, that divine expression of countenance, how was it possible to remain insensible to such a combination of charms, to resist their all-subduing influence? —Ah! my bosom was but too sensible to them! —I seemed as it were altogether in a trance, —my soul seemed absorbed by feelings scarcely mundane."

"And thus inspired, you have produced a picture of which a Raffaelle, a Correggio, or any of the greatest masters of antiquity, might have been proud?"

"Alas, no!—Sneer not at me, good Mr. Steady, while I am forced to confess that never was a more abortive attempt made. Instead of my pensive nun being sublime, I am afraid she will be found positively ludicrous;—instead of her rapt soul sitting in her eyes, she has an awkward kind of leer, which might bear a very different interpretation."

"It is, however, a perfect likeness of the original?"

"Shame on thee, how dost thou dare insinuate an idea so profane?—It is well that I know thee thoroughly, or a cane across thy shoulders must be thy only answer.—O no!—far from being a likeness of the original, it is so shameful a caricature, that we have not dared to own a syllable of the matter to any one except yourself,—even dear papa has not been admitted into our confidence; for, complete as the failure was, I was ashamed of its being submitted to the criticism of so excellent a judge, and it is only from conviction that you will not betray us, that I venture on disclosing my distresses to you."

"Yet I cannot see why the whole matter should be relinquished in consequence of this one failure."

"Once more our ideas are not in perfect unison;—to me it seems that this failure presents a most unhappy omen for my future success. If love, that most powerful inspiration which can operate either upon the pen or the pencil, fails of producing the effect that might reasonably be expected, what hope can be entertained of my labours proving successful, when not acted upon by a stimulus equally powerful?"

"I stand corrected, and acknowledge my heresy towards the inspirations of the mischievous little deity. I suppose, then, that

your present purpose is only to make a short visit to London, for the sake of seeing the many objects of curiosity which it presents to the attention of strangers; but, these inspected, you will return quietly under the paternal roof, and there set yourself down seriously to sermon-making?"

"You go too fast.—Though cooled in my ardour for painting, I am far from being as yet positively decided against the pursuit; I am only following your good example, and taking time to *reflect* a little more before I determine on any thing. But if painting should be abandoned, believe me, I have not the least idea of its being superseded by sermon-making: I was only speculating in my mind whether it might not facilitate my views with regard to Margaret, if I were to adopt nunky's profession, and place myself under him as a clerk. Do you not think it probable that he would be more ready to give his daughter to a person of his own profession than to a painter?"

"Possibly:—but I am not sure that he would be very ready to give his daughter to a clerk just entered into his service."

"Pshaw!—you are such a cold calculator that you are enough to discourage a man in every project he forms; so let us talk no more about the matter at present, but tell me how

the wharf goes on ;—it fully answers your expectations, I hope? I mean to make you a visit there very soon, I can assure you; I long of all things to see you measuring out your sacks of coals."

"A longing which, however, must rest ungratified.—But I say, Walter, since you are fond of sketching views from nature, what say you to making another experiment before you resolve entirely upon abandoning the art, and see whether you cannot be more successful in taking an inside view of the wharf? You will find it vastly picturesque, I can assure you, and affording the finest contrasts of light and shade; though it must be confessed that the shade preponderates too much over the light. Then you might easily introduce one of our coal-porters in the character of Melancholy;—they are in general, trust me, very fine dignified figures, and their costume is very appropriate to your purpose:

All in robe of darkest grain
....
And stole of dusky sackcloth brown
Over their bulky shoulders thrown."

"Don't be such an egregious fool, Sam.—I see plainly that you are in your heart disposed to ridicule my attachment to the divine Margaret; but, upon my honour, I never was more

serious in my life. Trust me, such a passion as mine is no joke; and of this you would be convinced if happily your coldness should be one day subdued, as I sincerely hope it may be, and you should be as deeply smitten as I am at this moment."

"Indeed I think a serious passion a very serious thing; but I hope that yours is not yet arrived at this very serious point."

"You may be disposed to treat it lightly, because you know me volatile, and have seen me liable in many things to be easily swayed and changed by trifles. Yet, Sam, you of all people best know that I have a heart capable of a serious and steady attachment. Has it ever deviated in the slightest degree from the friendship by which we were united in our earliest infancy? Do you not find it at this moment firm and unshaken as it has ever been? And can you suppose that thus steady to friendship I may not be equally steady in love, which you have yourself often said you considered but as a higher degree of friendship? I assure you again and again, that I never was more serious in my life than when I say that I dote upon, that I adore Margaret."

I confess that I was somewhat thunderstruck at this serious and solemn appeal to my feelings, and assertion of the sincerity of his passion.

I had indeed considered it as one of those flights of imagination which I had seen occur perpetually upon a thousand occasions, as long as I had known him, which would amuse him for a short time, and then be thought of no more: but he now alarmed me. It was plain that he himself believed the passion serious; and having persuaded himself that it was so, he was, I saw plainly, in as much danger of acting upon that persuasion as if his heart were in reality ever so warmly engaged. All that Mr. Armstrong had said to me on the subject of forming such an early connection now came forcibly into my mind; nor could I, under these impressions, forbear asking my heart whether I did not owe it alike to him, to Walter, and to myself, to remonstrate strongly against the folly of this idea;—whether, considering the solemn charge given me by Mr. Armstrong, I could stand acquitted to my conscience in being silent at this moment:—and having determined that I could not, I began:—

"Indeed, Walter, since you make so serious an appeal to me, I should think myself extremely to blame if I did not answer you seriously; if I permitted myself another word which should bear the appearance of levity or ridicule. Still more should I think myself de-

serving of censure if I did not acknowledge,—with the most sincere and heartfelt gratitude acknowledge,—the kind, the affectionate, the unremitted friendship with which you have from infancy honoured me. If I have seemed now to joke with you, or treat as a subject of a light and trivial nature the feelings you have been confiding to me, it was because I believed that there was nothing more in them than one of those wild sallies incidental to persons of our age. Young men are prone to fancying themselves in love with every pretty girl they see:—they rave about them for a time, and then they are thought of no more. Such, excuse me, Walter, I conceived to be the case with regard to your passion,—such I will still flatter myself with finding it; for it would give me heartfelt concern indeed, if I thought it of a more serious nature."

"And why such deep concern? What can be more natural than that, after spending three months in the house with such a girl as Margaret, I should be seriously smitten with her?—Believe me, there is nothing in this attachment which can give just cause of concern to any friend of mine:—the woman I adore is no less good and amiable than she is handsome. She has but one fault, at least I have never yet been able to discover any more than one, that she is somewhat too

serious and reserved. This, however, will be no objection to her as a wife, since she will of course throw off all reserve with her husband; and as to her being reserved to others, her husband will only on that account have less cause of jealousy, less reason to apprehend sharing the fate which has so often befallen the husbands of handsome women."

"Husband!—surely, Walter, it is not yet come to that!—you cannot surely have any serious thoughts at present of taking that title upon yourself?"

"And why not?—It is not very usual, I believe, for a young man to find himself exceedingly in love without thinking of becoming a husband. Besides, I cannot help feeling an inward assurance that I am fulfilling the intentions of the best of fathers in forming this connection. Can it be supposed that he would have thrown me in the way of two lovely girls,—for Fanny's a charming little creature, and but for the more transcendant beauty of her angelic sister, 'tis ten to one but I had fallen in love with her,—can it be supposed, I say, that my excellent father would have thrown me in the way of these two enchantresses but in the hope that I should attach myself to one of them? Indeed, Sam, I look upon it that this was a settled thing between my uncle Shelburne and my father;

and I can assure you that the idea of its being the latter's wish has had no small influence in fixing the passion upon me so firmly."

"My good friend, you are here, I must think, in a very dangerous error. Honoured as I have always been with the friendship and patronage of Mr. Armstrong,—living upon the terms of intimacy that I have ever been permitted to do at your house,—I have had more than common opportunities of knowing the general turn of his sentiments; and I think that, far from wishing you at so early a period of life to form such an engagement, the mere idea of it would give him the utmost uneasiness. Consider but for a moment the consequences of encumbering yourself at your age with a wife and family, when even the means by which you are hereafter to gain your subsistence are scarcely determined. How are they to be supported? Would you bring upon your father the burden of maintaining them?—or would you marry a woman for whom you profess so tender an attachment, without knowing how she is to be maintained? Is such conduct honourable? Could you in conscience take such a step? Can you suppose that your father ever could entertain such an idea? My dear Walter, for Heaven's sake think what you are about! If you have any regard for your-

self, if you have any regard for one of the best of fathers, think of it! I am a young man like yourself; my sentiments are not those of one chilled with age, who is insensible to youthful feelings; and if I saw you in a situation to live comfortably in a wedded life, I should be one of the furthest in the world from persuading you out of your present notions: but I really think that encumbering yourself with a wife under your present circumstances, would be one of the heaviest misfortunes that could befall you."

"Upon my word, Sam, this is a most excellent sermon; and I think, as you have so good a talent at sermonizing, you have done very wrong to abandon the church. But you need not be under such very great alarms upon the subject, since I can assure you that I have not the least intention of marrying till I am settled in some way of gaining a livelihood; nor even then without the entire approbation of my father. My choice is decidedly made; I have reason to think myself not disagreeable to the object of it; and if I am not mistaken in this idea, but she will consent to make me happy when we can marry with prudence, I do not see that any reasonable objection can be made to my engaging myself now. You cannot think how much more industriously I shall

pursue whatever studies I determine upon at last, under the idea that my labours are in the end to meet so rich a reward."

"You would even, I suppose, like Jacob, cheerfully undergo a fourteen years' probation to obtain your mistress?"

"Not very cheerfully, I must confess.—I should be perfectly satisfied with being kept upon the rack of expectation for as many months. But, seriously, I have made up my mind to wait any reasonable time for her, provided I can only be assured that she will ultimately be mine;—that I shall not be treated at last as poor Jacob was."

"For that there will be no excuse, since it is the eldest sister, not the youngest, who is the object of your affections. However, it gives me infinite satisfaction to learn that you have no thoughts at present of bringing the matter to a conclusion. Wait at least till you are of age;—it is quite time enough to think of managing a wife, when the law considers us as old enough to manage ourselves."

"As to that, I do not believe that I shall ever have half as much difficulty in managing a wife as in managing myself; and Margaret above all things is the most tractable creature in nature. O! she is the very best of daughters! I dare say she never in the course of her

life gave an hour's uneasiness to either of her parents;—and if such a daughter, what may not be expected of her as a wife? But no more of this at present: I promise you, upon my honour, that I shall not, for some weeks at least, give you occasion to make up a long serious face, because your thoughtless friend Walter has done such a silly thing as to marry."

All further conversation was for that time precluded by our receiving a summons to attend at the dinner-table below.

CHAPTER VII.

Meditations in descending a staircase.—A rencontre after a long separation.—Self-investigation.—An agreeable mode of passing a night.

ABUNDANT subject of meditation, and that by no means of a very pleasant nature, was furnished me in the communication here made by Walter. It was not that I saw any reason to suppose the passion he had professed for his cousin of a nature to be really injurious to his repose. Notwithstanding the emphatic manner in which he had assured me of its ardour and sincerity, I knew his disposition so well, that I still flattered myself it was nothing more than one of those sallies of imagination by which he was continually led away; and that if the immediate consequences on which he then seemed to meditate could be prevented, the whole matter would in a few months be thought of no more. Yet at the same time I could not deny to myself, that cherishing in his bosom the sentiments which he really believed himself to feel for Margaret; and constitutionally impelled as he always was to acting upon the immediate impulse, without the least reflection upon remoter consequences, he might, in the same inconsiderate way that he had done many other

things, even be guilty of such a folly as to shackle himself for life with no better prospects than were then before him. I was equally aware too, that the mischief might be done with that celerity which would render its prevention impossible, because no reasonable person could entertain an idea of his committing such an extravagance, consequently could not think of taking measures to circumvent it. Was it not then my part to inform either Mr. Shelburne or Mr. Armstrong, without delay, of what had passed, and to hint the possible consequences to be apprehended, that, being aware of the danger, precautions might be taken against those apprehensions being realized?

It was obvious, however, that the extent of Walter's danger must depend very much upon the disposition of his beloved, since, independently of her, no step could be taken which would give just ground of alarm. If Margaret was of the same thoughtless and romantic turn as himself, his danger I saw must be great, and there was no saying what might not be the consequence of more direct advances on his part:—but if, on the contrary, she had ever so little discretion, the imprudence of marrying him in his present circumstances was so glaring, that it was impossible she could think of it. I became consequently as anxious to see

her as Walter could possibly wish, though not for the same reason;—I wanted to study her disposition, and infer from my observations upon it, what was to be hoped or feared for my friend.

Walter had said that she was of a very serious turn,—even too serious. This seemed to afford reason for indulging a hope that she might have sense enough to see the folly of his proposals, if they should be made;—yet I knew well that an appearance of seriousness was not always to be depended upon as an assurance of real prudence. Sometimes, instead of being an index to a reflecting mind, a mark of exuberance of intellect, it rather evinced the want of any;—indeed, as far as I had been presented with opportunities of observing characters, I thought that excessive reserve and frigidity, in persons so young as Margaret, proceeded more commonly from dullness, and an absence of ideas, than from an overflow of them. If Margaret's reserve arose from this latter cause, I thought Walter's danger great; since dullness, while it felt no pleasure in accepting such proposals, would not have sufficient reflection to reject them. I was however soon to be introduced to the family, and I thought that I would scrutinize the young lady's character very narrowly; then, according to

the opinion I should form of it, the proper course for me to pursue would be plainly marked out.

These ideas passed rapidly in my mind as I descended the staircase from the drawing-room in Chatham Place, which had been the scene of this interview, to the dining-parlour. Here we found only Mr. Carberry, to whom I presented his nephew Walter, they being as yet strangers to each other, and in a minute after we were joined by the ladies. Walter had never seen his cousin Katherine Middleton since she was down at Langham about two years before her father's death, at which time she was only eight years old; this was therefore almost like a new introduction to each other. That he should meet her with looks and expressions of kindness and affection, was to be expected; for never did there exist a being with a more kind and affectionate disposition; added to which he stood in so near a relationship to her, and respected her mother so much, that it would have been unnatural had he not been disposed to feel towards her even more than a common share of the partiality of consanguinity:—that his feelings should lead him beyond these bounds, was not to be expected in one who had but the moment before been professing how entirely his heart was devoted to another. But

his mode of accosting her was rather with the ardour of a lover who finds himself restored to the presence of a long absent mistress, than with the calm affection of a relation. He flew up to her, and, taking her hand, expressed with all the eagerness of a lover's transports the delight he felt in their renewed acquaintance, and broke out into a strain of the most high-flown compliments on the alteration and improvement discernible in her since their last meeting. And yet perhaps, he said, he was wrong in making use of the term *improvement*, since perfection is incapable of improvement;—it was only the sweet, the engaging, the lovely child matured into the elegant, the accomplished, the fascinating woman;—the eyes which then beamed so ineffably with all the charms of artless innocence, that they intwined themselves irresistibly round every heart, possessed now a different expression;—though still sweet, still enchanting, it was perhaps too dangerous an experiment to think of meeting their glance, lest, instead of their only intwining themselves round the surface of the heart, they might kindle an inextinguishable flame within its inmost recesses.

The fluency and volubility with which he strung his fine speeches seemed to strike the object to whom they were addressed mute

with astonishment, nor knew she what to reply, or which way to look.. It was evidently a strain of hyperbole to which she was wholly unaccustomed, and to which she had no pleasure in listening; for, casting down her eyes, confused and abashed, she seemed silently to entreat him to spare her, and descend from such lofty flights to expressions of kindness and good-will somewhat more intelligible,—somewhat better suited to common life. Indeed these heroics acted like an electric shock upon the whole company, since we all stood looking at each other without speaking a word, while the *viands* were chilling upon the table and no one attempted to take a seat. Mrs. Carberry at length said with a smile,—"My dear Walter, you must surely have been entering upon a new course of study since I saw you, with a view to qualifying yourself more efficiently for the profession you are to follow! Taking warning by the ill-success which, we are told in the fable, attended the painter who at the commencement of his career adhered too strictly to the simple unadorned truth, you have commenced by perfecting yourself in the art of flattery, as the preliminary to painting, that you may never be in danger of experiencing a failure of success in the one, from not having attained a

due proficiency in the other. But come, let me request that these flourishes may be reserved for the painting-room; all things have their proper time and place, and at the present moment our attention shall, if you please, be rather directed to the grosser food before us, destined to cherish our corporeal natures, than to that more refined aërial food with which the imagination delights to nurture itself, and on which, to judge by the effects, you seem to have been banqueting already very luxuriantly."

"My dear aunt," Walter replied with the utmost readiness, at the same time seating himself by Katherine, "you are indeed rather severe; but I can assure you that I have no otherwise been studying the art of complimenting, but as it was to be acquired irresistibly in contemplating the bright eyes and enchanting form of my cousin Margaret; and it was, you must yourself allow, highly natural, that I should apply what I had so learned on being introduced to another and a still fairer cousin."

Nor were the compliments paid at the first rencontre the mere flash of the instant. During dinner, and through the whole afternoon, he was so full of his gallantries and attentions to Katherine, and lavished upon her such a

profusion of the same high-flown expressions of admiration, it might almost be said of adulation, that any one who saw and heard him would naturally have concluded him her professed admirer, nor ever suspected for a moment that he could be even then, as he had declared, under the influence of a devoted attachment to another.

To me my friend now appeared under quite a new character. Amid all his sallies I had never before witnessed any thing like this, and it opened to me a wide field for reflections and speculations. My own disposition was so remote from any propensity to similar aberrations, that it seemed to me wholly incomprehensible in what part of the brain they could be first engendered;—at least the brain capable of producing them I was certain must be organized in a very different manner from my own. I thought besides, that if such rhapsodies were a necessary part of paying our court to the ladies, I had a very poor chance of ever insinuating myself into their good graces, since I not only was then, but felt that I ever should be, absolutely incapable of attaining any thing like a similar elevation either of sentiments or of language in which to express my feelings. That Walter was so great a proficient in this art was a new discovery to me; but it must be

owned that I had not been hitherto much in the way of seeing him in the sort of company which would call his talents forth,—that of young ladies. Perhaps, after the flights of enthusiasm with which he had entertained me on the subject of painting, I had no reason to be surprised at any thing of a similar nature in which his imagination might indulge itself, when addressing, or speaking of, the most enchanting object in the creation to a painter's eye, a fine woman.

Be this as it may, I was so far from feeling any thing like the inspiration with which my friend was animated, that I never, among the company by which I was then surrounded, was so much disposed to be dull, pensive, and thoughtful. In vain did Mrs. Carberry, who seemed not unobservant of this unusual gloom, endeavour to dispel it by engaging me in conversation. I was scarcely sensible that she was speaking, even when addressing herself particularly to me, much less did I know sufficiently what she said, to give her a reasonable answer: my attention was so wholly engrossed between what Walter had communicated to me before dinner, and the extraordinary attention I now saw him paying to Katherine, that I was insensible to every thing else. Even my little friends Edward and Sophia were neg-

lected;—Edward brought his book to read to me, but I knew not a single word that he read;—Sophia wanted me to draw her a house,—I never sketched so wretched an apology for one;—to Walter alone could I attend, of Walter alone could I think. To conclude the whole of this extraordinary scene in a manner worthy of its general tenor, as we were about to part for the evening, he seized an opportunity of drawing me aside, when he assured me that he thought Katherine one of the most charming girls he had ever seen, and he did not know what might have been the consequence of the admiration with which she had inspired him, if his heart had not been entirely preoccupied with his passion for the divine Margaret.

I cannot describe the effect which this declaration had upon me. That the uneasiness with which I had been impressed by our conversation before dinner should not have been lessened by it, would have been highly unnatural, since it seemed impossible, if Walter had really been under the influence of as strong a passion for Margaret as he had professed, that he could have thought at the same moment of being deeply smitten with another woman. Perhaps I ought therefore equally to have disregarded any intimations thrown out by him of a rising attachment to Katherine, convinced

that the heart which could thus halt between two passions was not very deeply affected with either; but this latter declaration roused into action sensations which I had no idea till then were the inmates of my bosom, and made an appeal to them so powerful that I was rendered in a moment wholly insensible to every thing else. I will not say that his words operated upon my nerves like an electric shock,—I will not say that I was thunderstruck by them,—these are terms which would poorly express the sensations by which I was in an instant overpowered. I thought I should have sunk down into the earth, the room seemed to turn round with me, I could see no object distinctly,—my bosom laboured with a kind of oppression which seemed almost like suffocation,—I seemed incapable of breathing, of speaking.—I answered not a word to Walter,—I found myself incapable of remaining another instant in company, I could not look at Katherine;—nothing remained for me but to hasten out of the room as speedily as possible; it was absolutely necessary for me to be alone, it seemed the only chance afforded me of not falling into some extravagance, for all my ideas were in such a state of confusion, that the only one which seemed clear was the conviction of the disorder into which they were thrown. I has-

tily took my leave of Mr. and Mrs. Carberry, though how I did it I cannot tell, and faltering out a good night to Walter as we parted, on quitting the house, I set off and ran instinctively to my own apartments, with as much rapidity as if I had been pursued by a host of bailiffs whom I was endeavouring to elude, for my reason had no share in any movement that I made;—there, locking myself in I knew not why, I threw myself into a chair, as little knowing what was my purpose in doing so.

The sociable footing on which I had always been received at Mr. Carberry's, and the intimacy between Katherine and myself which had insensibly arisen from our having been so long reciprocally tutors and pupils to each other, had certainly created a sort of tie between us, which I felt to be stronger than that of a common acquaintance; yet I can truly say, I had never hitherto conceived that the idea could be entertained by me of its leading ultimately to a more permanent connection. Notwithstanding the easy and familiar footing upon which I felt myself at all times both at the rectory at Langham and in Chatham Place, yet I was always so perfectly aware of the distance at which I was placed from the family of my benefactors by the inferiority of my birth, that the idea of aspiring to the hand of Katherine,

if such an one had ever dared to obtrude itself upon my mind, would have appeared to me scarcely less preposterous than that of aspiring to the hand of the princess royal of England herself;—the one was removed so far above me, that it seemed as if I might as well have looked to one even further removed above her, as have thought of looking up to her. I was permitted freely to enjoy her company;—to have been deprived of this indulgence would have been one of the severest mortifications I could endure;—but since no danger was to be apprehended of my being subjected to this mortification, my heart was content, nor seemed to ask for more.

Such had at least hitherto been my feelings. Katherine was still young, nor had ever appeared a particular object of attention among the young men who visited at the house; so that nothing like a sentiment of jealousy had at any time been awakened in my mind. Thus, not considering her as in immediate danger of being carried away by another, I never thought of investigating the extent of my own attachment to her; and indeed if I had seriously asked myself whether I was in love with her, the question would probably have been answered in the negative;—it was a degree of presumption of which I should have

persuaded myself that I was incapable. But the case was now changed,—Walter had declared himself half smitten with her, and my soul was roused from the torpor in which it had so long been lulled. For the first time the image of this amiable girl possessed by another was presented to my imagination, and that imagination had involuntarily started from it, as from a phantom the possibility of whose existence was only then established;—I tried to detach my ideas from dwelling upon it; but the more earnestly these endeavours were made, the less successful they proved.—I tried then, since I found the phantom was not to be banished, at least to contemplate it with fortitude and resignation: but, alas! the more it was contemplated the more cruelly did it harrow up my soul;—I shrunk from it with an agony of which experience alone could communicate any idea.

It was true that I had repeatedly heard her represented by the voice of common rumour, as the destined wife of Maurice Carberry; but instructed as I was in her sentiments with regard to him, this was a report never calculated to give me a moment's uneasiness. And indeed had I been less instructed on this point, still the union was so perfectly incongruous that I never could have supposed it likely to take

place. If it had appeared possible for a sensible girl like Katherine to think of uniting herself to such a shallow coxcomb as the count, I was perfectly assured that he would never condescend to bestow a thought upon a girl whose education had been so different to that bestowed upon young ladies of fashion. A man whose whole soul was devoted to the *beau-monde* would never be able to endure a woman who was more assiduous in ornamenting her mind than her person;—who was more fond of a country ramble to admire the beauties of nature, than of inhaling the dust side by side with the coachman upon the barouche-box in Hyde-Park;—who was in short more anxious to store the inside of her head with furniture solidly useful, than to make the outside sparkle with a tinsel glare.

But Walter was a very different personage from Maurice. Though it could not be denied that he had his imperfections, yet they were such as a woman might readily overlook, such as I myself had always found more than counterbalanced by his good qualities,—by a heart capable of the finest feelings of friendship, generous to excess, frank, open, and glowing with all the warmth of the purest benevolence. His failings were only those of the thoughtlessness and volatility of youth, his

virtues were such as time would constantly improve and mature. Was not this a character by which the heart of a woman of sense and sensibility might easily be captivated?—was it even natural that such a woman should know and not be interested by it?—Alas, I felt but too deeply that this must be, that it ought to be.—Above all, could any thing be more natural than that Mrs. Carberry should wish exceedingly to see her daughter united to the son of two persons who had been so dear to her as her brother and Sophia;—to one who was doubly her nephew, doubly the cousin of her daughter, and whom she must regard with scarcely less affection than that daughter herself? Every way such an alliance must be most desirable to her, in every light it was a thing which she must particularly wish, and I could not be sufficiently astonished at my own dullness, in never having thought before of the probability of such an union.

My first movement on hearing Walter's declaration was to be extremely out of humour with him,—to condemn in very severe terms that fickleness and volatility of disposition which could one moment be so deeply smitten with one cousin, and the next so ready to transfer his affections to another. But I now checked myself, and endeavoured to think

that it was perfectly right and natural it should be so, and that the deep interest which I took in the Armstrong family ought rather, alike from duty, from gratitude, and from inclination, to make me rejoice in a prospect which must be so satisfactory to them all. Besides, thinking as I did myself of Katherine, could I find any thing extraordinary in her having made an equally deep impression upon Walter?—should I not have thought him extremely dull and insensible if he had not admired her? Most certainly I should.—Well then, why was I disposed to arraign him?—To have flown from Katherine to Margaret might have shown levity and versatility,—to fly from Margaret to Katherine only showed that he had the power of making a just discrimination between different degrees of merit;—at least so I felt assured, for I could not possibly suppose the merits of the one cousin equal to those of the other. —It was besides to be recollected, that when professing himself so deeply smitten with Margaret, he was almost unacquainted with Katherine, never having seen her since they were both mere children.

The night had nearly drawn to a conclusion while I was still revolving over these things in my mind, not having perceived that I had remained all that time by my fireside, that I had

never been in bed. One truth remained strongly impressed upon me as the result of the whole matter, that I had unwarily, and imprudently, suffered a passion to gain an ascendancy over me which every feeling of duty and honour forbade me to think of cherishing;—which they commanded me to combat with all the fortitude, all the resolution, that I was capable of exerting. The conclusion was, that I resolved, by the future distance and reserve of my behaviour towards Katherine, to make every atonement in my power for the presumption of which I had been guilty;—to go through, by such a forbearance, the severest penance which it was possible to impose upon myself, as an extenuation of my offence. I started from my chair, and threw myself upon the bed for a short time, that it might not appear as if I had been up all night, and repaired at the usual hour to Mr. Fenton's breakfast table,—rejoiced that I had been roused into this explanation with my heart, and led to enter the lists against a fatal passion, while as yet I trusted that it was not too deeply rooted to be combated with success.

CHAPTER VIII.

More reflections.—An extraordinary resolution taken.—Difficulty of carrying it into effect.—An unexpected visit received, and a sagacious discovery made in the course of it.

I SUPPOSE that I carried strongly in my countenance the effect of the perturbed and restless night which I had passed, since Mr. Fenton first, and afterwards Mrs. Fenton, as I successively saw them, inquired very particularly after my health, observing that I looked as if I had scarcely closed my eyes all night, and if they had not known that I came home at a very reasonable hour the evening before, they should have suspected that the last seven or eight hours had been passed any where rather than in my bed. At both times the observation had the effect of suffusing my cheek with the deepest scarlet. This seemed to strike the good people rather forcibly; for I could perceive them survey me with a very inquisitive eye, as if saying within themselves, "How is this blush to be interpreted?—is it possible that we have touched a tender string;—that we were mistaken in supposing him to have come home in good time, and he has indeed been passing the night in a way with which conscience now reproaches

him severely?—Yet we know that he was in before the gates were shut for the night:—can it be then that he has already contrived some illicit means of eluding our vigilance, and rendering nugatory the precautions taken by his friends for the preservation of his morals? —Has he devised some contrivance for letting himself out of the wharf after we suppose him safely lodged for the night? and, not yet thoroughly hardened in guilt, does a feeling of self-reproach lead him thus to betray his secret?"

Reflections to this effect I could fancy at the moment passing through their minds, and I had afterwards good reason to suppose that I was not mistaken. My unusual silence during breakfast, a meal at which we were generally very chatty and sociable, contributed no doubt not a little to strengthen their suspicions;—at least such a speculation occurred to me afterwards, for at the time I was too much absorbed in thoughts of a very different kind, for the idea to obtrude itself; it was only when I was at a future period taking a retrospective view of so memorable an epoch in my life, that I was led to speculate whether this might not be the case. However, if I had thought of it at the time, the effect would not have been different, for to have uttered a word while my mind was in this disturbed state was absolutely

impossible. I repaired after breakfast to my allotted post in the compting-house: but never was I so dull and stupid at my business before; I really could scarcely tell whether two and two made four, or five; I could think of nothing but the subject of my nocturnal meditations;—I could only lay plans for the regulation of my future conduct, and reject them as soon as conceived;—I could only make a thousand good resolutions, though utterly at a loss how they were to be carried into effect.

My first resolve was, from that moment to absent myself as much as possible from Katherine's company, though I was sensible that very great difficulties must occur in my adherence to this resolution. How was I to withdraw myself from society in which it was evident that I had hitherto taken a particular delight, without exciting suspicions perhaps of not a very pleasant nature? Not that I ever supposed the true reason would be suspected: if I had, I could never have dared to show my face among any of the Armstrong family again, I should have supposed them so justly indignant at my presumption. But other motives might be imputed to me which I deprecated extremely; though it would even have been less painful to me to know that I lay under suspicions injurious to my moral character,

than to know myself suspected of having dared to admit into my bosom the passion by which it was likely to be slowly consumed. I might be supposed tired of quiet and rational society, and running into scenes of idleness and dissipation; or it might be suspected that I had formed some other attachment, to which all my leisure hours were devoted. Well, if it must be so, better it were that such suspicions should be entertained, than that I should be perpetually incurring the hazard of betraying myself by some unguarded word or look, than that I should live in the constant state of temptation to transgress the silence I had imposed upon myself, which I knew would inevitably be the case whenever I found myself alone with Katherine.

It was thus that, though I had hitherto seemed as it were to forget my birth, and had been led amid the kind notice of the Armstrong family, (of whom, without any great misapplication of the term, I might almost be called the general *enfant gâté*,) to consider myself rather in the light of one of them than as an alien; yet I found it now impossible not to recur to my own nothingness, and that even with sensations of a very painful kind. While among them such was the amenity with which I was received, so much did I seem placed by

them upon a footing of equality with themselves, that the real inferiority of my situation could scarcely be perceived; yet reflection had now cruelly interposed to dispel the illusion, and impress upon my mind in the most forcible manner the heart-rending assurance, not only that I was not in reality one of the family, but that even the remotest idea of ever becoming so must be firmly and resolutely repressed.

As an introductory step to the estrangement which I now found so necessary, I determined in the first place to be less regular in my Sunday dinings at Chatham Place; availing myself of the terms upon which the invitation was originally made, that I was not to consider myself as bound to come at all events, but was to remain entirely at liberty to form any other engagement I might wish, or even to stay away without any reason, if such should be my fancy. But I had no thoughts of making other engagements. Though not feeling myself endowed with fortitude sufficient to continue on the same footing as formerly with the Carberry family, I was determined to give as little reason as possible for improper motives being imputed to me in absenting myself from it; and the hours which had so pleasantly passed in this beloved society, I now devoted in idea to perfect seclu-

sion in my own apartment. I was resolved that the suspicions to my disadvantage, which I had reason to suppose were awakened in the minds of the Fentons, should not receive a colour of confirmation from their seeing me frequent any other society than that of the respectable and respected friends with whom I had hitherto so much delighted to pass my hours of leisure. It might be imputed to me that I was become misanthropic and eremitical; but I was determined that no just grounds should be given for charging me with dissipation.

Yet here another reflection which gave me no pleasure came over my mind. In absenting myself from Chatham Place to remain at home on a Sunday, was I not giving a handle for people to suspect that one of the Miss Fentons was the magnet which fixed me so entirely at the wharf? Such an interpretation of my conduct I thought would not appear a forced one; perhaps even it would give the Fenton family themselves some ground to attribute this sudden alteration in my conduct to such a motive; and this was a thing which of all others I wished to avoid. I had always been well aware that my situation here was such as very probably to give occasion for busy-bodies to lay out a match between me and one of the Miss Fentons; and since I felt from the very

commencement of our acquaintance, even before I was aware how much my heart was devoted to another, that neither of these ladies was capable of lighting up a flame there, I was particularly anxious to avoid every thing which might lead them to suppose otherwise. In fact, the exchange of society from the family in Chatham Place to that at the Wharf was in itself sufficiently mortifying, without the additional mortification of its being ascribed to a passion which it was impossible I ever could feel. The Fentons were in many respects very good kind of people, and were really very kind to me; but I had been accustomed from my infancy to a familiar intercourse with such highly polished minds, that their society could never be more than a matter of endurance to me, it could never be a source of pleasure.

In pursuing these reflections, I could not help at length recurring to feelings which had more than once come over my mind during that period of Mr. Armstrong's illness, when his recovery appeared all but hopeless. The loss of him from the parish would, I was sensible, include also that of his son; for Walter could not remain there when his father should be no more. With whom then could I in future, while under my father's roof, associate

on any thing like terms of equality?—Those who were by birth my equals, had been thrown, by the difference of our education, at an immense distance below me, nor could it be possible for any thing like an intercourse of familiarity to subsist between us. Even with regard to my father, though I entertained the warmest respect for him, as one to whom I owed a very large debt of gratitude, yet it was impossible not to feel that, as companions, our sentiments and habits could not in any way be congenial to each other;—no, I was but too sorrowfully aware that, Mr. Armstrong being no more, and Walter having left the place, thenceforth my visits to my father must be little less than an irksome duty, and could scarcely be productive of much real pleasure to either. Unable to enter into the society of his usual companions, and having none of my own to take me away from him and them, I must remain an insulated being for the time of my stay with him, while my being there would prevent his enjoying the society of his friends in his usual way.

These kind of reflections intruded themselves at that time so often upon me, that I was more than once induced to ask myself whether there was not as much pain as pleasure in being raised by education so far above

our parents and natural connexions, that our intercourse with them can no longer be on that footing of perfect ease and equality so delightful between parents and children;—that the respect and attention we pay them, must arise rather from a sense of duty, than from that sweet sympathy and perfect union of hearts which ought to bind together persons standing in so near and dear a relationship. I know that the moment when I was first fully impressed with the little equality there was between my parents and myself, was a very painful one; so painful, that I half wished my old attachment to my father's trade had never forsaken me, but that I had retained it so pertinaciously as to render it impossible to push me into any other way of life.

I must here deprecate one part of my meaning, in relating these reflections, as they suggested themselves to me, being misunderstood. It is by no means my intention to reprobate indiscriminately the idea of a parent's endeavouring to raise a child above the situation in which he was born. I only mean to give a faithful representation of the sensations I have experienced upon the subject on different occasions in the course of my life, and to describe without varnish or disguise, the relative situation in which at different periods I have

found myself placed with regard to my parents, and to those who by birth and rank might be considered as my most natural associates. The moment at which these reflections were first awakened, was one when the objections against seeking that elevation for me to which my father aspired, were obtruded upon my mind in a very forcible and, I may add, very painful manner, and they were now renewed under circumstances which I even felt, if possible, more painfully: it was not very surprising therefore that I should, for a while at least, be visited by doubts as to the expediency of the thing itself, abstractedly considered. I will readily acknowledge, however, that if on some occasions wayward and adverse circumstances have led me into momentary regrets at my own exaltation, and made me cast a retrospective glance, accompanied with secret longings, to the days when my highest ambition was to excel in my father's trade; yet, this transient irritation passed, the feelings have instantly subsided, and I have been ready the next moment to acknowledge,—with the most heartfelt gratitude to acknowledge,—the obligations I am under to my parents for the sacrifices they made to raise me to a situation so far above their own.

Certain it is that, whether reasonable or un-

reasonable, I never felt so forcibly as at this moment the mortification to which I must unavoidably be sometimes subjected by the sort of ambiguous situation which I held in society;—while by birth I was not entitled to associate with the class that comes under the description of gentlemen and gentlewomen, yet by education and habits I felt myself wholly unfitted for any other. For if, in the common intercourses of life, this situation was necessarily one in which the pleasures that it had the power of communicating were far from being unaccompanied with a due portion of alloy, what, I asked myself, must be my prospects in thinking of a matrimonial connection?—If I found it irksome to associate only as common acquaintance with persons who had had less the education of a gentleman than myself, how was it possible to support the idea of passing all that remained of life, how long or short a period soever it might be, with a female of the class that would have no claim to reject my proposals on account of the inferiority of my birth? Could I, after having been accustomed to the society of such women as Mrs. Carberry and her daughter, bear the affected insipidity of girls of low birth, who had received what is deemed by their parents a genteel education, but in which the cultivation of the mind bears no part,—or,

even worse, the coarseness of manners to be expected if their birth had not been corrected by education?—With a woman of either of these descriptions, it would be impossible for me to endure life.

Where then was I to look for a wife?—In the sphere where alone I could expect to find one to my taste I must not presume to look, and I never could support the idea of taking one from any other:—the result was, that I was fully determined never to marry at all. O, had my father ever known of this determination!—could he ever have conceived that the phantom once raised by Mr. Armstrong to alarm him and bring him to reason on the subject of my abandoning the church, that in me the family of Danville might, if he persisted in his plan, be extinct, was about to be realised;—could he ever have suspected that there had been a time when it was my fixed determination to embody and give existence to this phantom, I know not what might have been the effect produced upon him,—I know not to what acts of violence, either towards me or towards himself, it might not have endangered the leading him.—But at the same time that I made it, I resolved that it should remain a secret to every body but myself. My father might see with regret and mortification, that I

remained single; yet he should still be left to entertain a hope that one day or other my indifference to the fair sex, my indisposition to fetter myself in hymeneal bonds, might be overcome, and that he might behold me surrounded by a group of young descendants;—he should never know that the state of celibacy in which I continued was the result of deliberate choice,—was one which it was my unalterable determination never to abandon.

And now was I assailed by another subject of poignant regret and deep self-reproach;—now did I sincerely and heartily repent of having so positively and pertinaciously resisted my father's wishes that I should go into the church; and I felt that, while I had persuaded myself I was acting through the whole transaction from the dictates of cool and dispassionate reason, I was in reality principally impelled by a powerful feeling, while reason acted but a very subordinate part. But was it not possible to retract my errors?—was there not still an opening left for recantation?—Though the past could not be recalled, my doom was not, surely, so irrevocably fixed as to leave no possibility of future changes. Why should I not write a penitential letter to my father, expressing my sorrow for what

had passed, and stating my conviction of the error under which I had laboured, in taking exception to the plan he had chalked out for me? Why should I not confess, that after a long experience of three whole months I found that I was extremely mistaken in my ideas of the advantages to be derived from the situation I had chosen, that it did not in any way answer my expectations, and that I was now ready to return to college, nay, was even desirous of it, and would pursue my academical studies, as a preliminary to taking orders, with such redoubled zeal as would fully make amends for past transgressions? I was perfectly aware that in doing this I should be liable to the charge of intolerable caprice; but I felt also that it would be productive of a double good, fully sufficient to counterbalance any odium attached to it. In the first place, I should be furnished with a reason for flying the society of Katherine, without endangering the creating a suspicion of what was passing in my mind,—and this was an object of the first importance to me. In the next place, my abstaining from matrimony would have the appearance of necessity, not choice, since I should be totally incapable of maintaining a wife and family while dependent

on college emoluments for my own support; a consideration scarcely less important than the other.

I was in the midst of these reveries, I had even scratched upon a scrap of paper some hasty ideas as the basis of a letter to my father, when I was interrupted by the entrance of Walter, who shaking me eagerly by the hand, said he had been begging a holiday for me of uncle Carberry, who had in the most obliging manner consented to his request, as he said that I was in general so good a boy and so attentive to my business. "You may therefore if you please, Mr. Steady," says he, "put by your pens and ink, and all these ponderous volumes, and make yourself a beau, so that you may appear to advantage among the ladies; for, be it known to thee, that thou art first to ramble about all the morning with me as my cicerone, and then I am to introduce thee to the dinner-table of uncle Shelburne, where thou wilt be blessed with a sight of my divinity."

Though at that moment I felt myself perfectly indisposed to the society either of divinities or of mortals, and would have given the world to be left for the whole day quiet and abandoned to my own meditations,—I was afraid to attempt framing any excuses for de-

clining the invitation, lest that should awaken suspicions in Walter, of such a nature as I particularly deprecated. I was in that state of mind that the most trifling circumstance could occasion me the cruelest alarms,—anxious to appear perfectly at my ease and unembarrassed, as if there was not a thought in my heart but what was visible to every one, yet so tortured with the sources of vexation and mortification just opened upon me, that I could scarcely conceive my disquietudes not as obvious to every one who saw me, as they were deeply felt by myself;—at least it seemed as if a word or look might make them so, and I dreaded nothing so much as that word or look escaping me. Besides, the sight of Walter seemed in some sort to reproach me with my thoughts having been for so many hours entirely occupied by my own concern;—with the share in them to which he had so urgent a claim not having been accorded to him. I seemed totally to have forgotten what had passed between us the preceding day, respecting his attachment to Margaret, and the argument I had held with myself, whether it ought not to be immediately communicated to his father. However, I called to mind that the result was a determination to suspend the communication at least till I had seen the lady; so that, in fact, no unnecessary delay in making

it had resulted from my having suffered my thoughts to be wholly estranged from the subject. I was now about to see this object of my friend's adoration, and to have an opportunity of forming the judgement I wished, upon her disposition, so that any further reflections might be spared till my return home at night.

But before we were to enter on our more distant perambulations, Walter insisted upon looking all over the coal-yard. I carried him round therefore in due form; when, in the course of our survey, passing the door of Mr. Fenton's house, we met Mrs. Fenton with her two daughters coming out of it. I of course saluted them, and Walter as naturally inquired who they were; which having learned,—"Oho!" said he, "I see then how the matter is. Ah, Sam, when you described your situation here in one of your letters, I was immediately struck with the idea that you had an excellent opportunity of recommending yourself to one of these girls, living upon so familiar a footing in the house, and I thought you could not do better than to commence a formal siege; provided always that they were something tolerable, so that the pill would not be a very bitter one to swallow; for indeed they have fortunes not to be despised. And now I see them I am confirmed in my idea, for their appear-

ance is really so much above their rank in life, that 'tis evident they must have been well educated. I would have you therefore consider the matter seriously; I am sure that the means of recommending yourself to the favour of any girl you wish to please, are not wanting wherever inclination calls upon you for their exertion. And who knows but that one of these damsels may be the fair who stands recorded in the great book of fate as the favoured individual who is at last to subdue your general coldness to the sex?—Ha!—a blush!—That seems a silent testimony that I am not very wide of the truth."

Most true indeed was it that I did blush, for I felt as deep a scarlet spread itself over my countenance at these observations, as at those of Mr. and Mrs. Fenton in the morning. Not that the reader, who is already admitted into the secret, will suppose that it was occasioned by any of the feelings towards either Emma or Clarissa Fenton that Walter was disposed to impute to me: acquainted as he is with the state of my heart, he will see that my friend was upon a scent very wide of the truth. This however I was not sorry to see, since, under the influence of such a prepossession, there was much less danger of his suspecting the real fact; and as long as I could flatter

myself with that being effectually concealed, I was little anxious about the nature of the veil thrown over it. Yet, confused as I was, no answer was ready at hand, and my silence confirming his suspicions he proceeded:

"Well, Sam, I am heartily rejoiced at this discovery; it gives me infinite satisfaction to find that you have not that total insensibility to the attractions of the lovely sex which other circumstances had led me to impute to you. If I may confess the truth, ever since I saw Katherine Middleton yesterday, it has appeared wholly unaccountable to me that you never, either in conversation or by letter, said any thing which could lead me to suppose that I was to see so charming a girl. In truth, I do not know that I ever heard her name pass your lips half a dozen times in my life; and if it was mentioned, it was with the same indifference that you talked of all other women: —though when I say all, I should make an exception in favour of aunt Carberry, of whom I must confess you always talked with enthusiasm, as if she was the sole object among the whole sex worthy of your honour's admiration. Many an ingenious speculation has this your indifference cost me, nor was I ever able with all my ingenuity to account for it satisfactorily. He does not want sensibility or

feeling, I have said to myself, yet his heart seems to contemplate the animated charms of the living female with the same tranquillity that it contemplates the inanimate ones of a fine picture or statue. What can be the reason of this?—how happens it that two hearts, which have always lived in such perfect union with each other as his and mine, can yet be so very differently organized?—for, while he views the whole sex with the utmost indifference, mine is disposed to be set into a flame by any new pair of bright eyes whose glances I may happen to encounter. Much more unaccountable does this indifference appear to me now that I know Katherine Middleton;—and the more I reflected upon it, as I lay thinking of her almost all last night, still but the more unaccountable did I find it. Now, however, I perceive that the whole matter is to be resolved into her not being the woman destined by fate to make an impression upon your heart; but, the fair for whom that destiny is reserved having been seen, the heart yields a ready obedience to what fate requires.—Confess, now, Sam, am I not right?"

"I am no great judge of beauty, nor was aware that Miss Middleton was handsome."

"I much admire that pretty evasive way of answering my question, which certainly re-

ferred to the Miss Fentons much rather than to my fair cousin. As to the latter being handsome or not, I can only observe, that she certainly has not the regular features, the fine contour, the perfect Grecian nose, the dignified form and carriage of Margaret Shelburne! But is there nothing dangerous in those eyes beaming with sweetness and benevolence, cast upon you with that perfect unconsciousness that there is any thing in them to be admired? In truth, they appear to me for this very reason only the more dangerous;—they kill but the more certainly, from the total absence of all intention to wound."

"Humph!—do you think so?"

"And then so sensible, such a flow of charming conversation!—though so young, there are few women of double her age who can talk as she does. And you, Sam, can have been her preceptor for so many years and yet retain your reason!—For my part, if I had been in the same situation I should have lost it long ago."

"Humph!—yes; but I am very reasonable, you know." I scarcely know how I uttered these words;—words which at the moment I felt my heart so cruelly contradicting, that even in the very act of pronouncing them the adverse feeling almost stifled my voice, while

nothing could repress a silent tear that started into my eye. Walter was however, happily, too much occupied with his own feelings upon the subject, which were certainly strong, though differently expressed, to attend to mine, and my tear and suffocated voice remained unnoticed,—it was the words only that fixed his attention.

"Well, my dear reasonable friend," he proceeded, "you are right. Cherish this tranquillity, I advise you most sincerely; 'tis the way, I truly believe, to pass happily through life. Would that I could attain it! But my heart is doomed, I fear, to be the seat of more tumultuous passions. A hermit or a lover I must ever be:—nothing but perfect seclusion from the loveliest part of this fair creation can ever secure me against being their devoted slave. Seriously, Sam, I do assure you that Katherine has already more than half my heart."

Had my mind been less confused, less tost about in a whirlwind of agitation, I should probably here have asked,—"And Margaret?" —But Walter had stumbled upon a subject of conversation of all others the most painful to me under the sensations of the moment; and to do more than utter with seriousness some dry and concise remarks, such as I had already

made, was at that time impossible. I left him therefore to talk on as he pleased; and he availed himself of my taciturnity to talk of nothing but Katherine for the greatest part of the morning; never suspecting that I was all the time suffering tortures equal to any ever inflicted by the Inquisition itself.

Nor was it altogether rhapsody, and as if effusions inspired by a transient and feeble impression, that he uttered,—he talked as if he really entered into the character of Katherine, and regarded it in a just point of view. If sometimes he soared into flights of imagination, and raved about darts and flames, and piercing glances from lovely eyes, yet in general he dwelt rather upon her more estimable qualities, —upon the good sense displayed in every thing she said,—on the just view she took of every subject upon which she conversed,—and on the amiable manner in which she conducted herself towards every part of the family. He talked with rapture of her pleasing attention to her father in-law, of her kindness to her little brother and sister, and above all of the devoted affection which she seemed to feel for her excellent mother. Yes, I found that Walter, if giddy and volatile, had yet a heart capable of discerning real worth and excellence, and of

duly appreciating their value. I felt that he deserved to be, that he must be, that he would be, the husband of Katherine Middleton. I felt all this; but I felt no less, that to see him so, which ought to have been my highest joy, would be my inexpressible and lasting torment.

CHAPTER IX.

A visit to the Shakespeare Gallery, and a mysterious occurrence there.—Curiosity excited by it.—Introduction to new acquaintance, and observations made upon them; with a dinner-table colloquy.

The survey of the coal-yard finished, it was now to be decided which way our morning rambles were to be directed. "Painting," said Walter, "dear, dear painting!—where the best specimens of that enchanting art which this great city can furnish are to be seen,—thither my devotion must be addressed; and aunt Carberry recommends the Shakespeare Gallery, as containing some of the pieces the most worthy of attention which have been furnished by the English school."

"Wherever you please," said I:—and to the Shakespeare Gallery we went.

"This is indeed a delicious treat!" exclaimed Walter in an ecstasy, as we entered the room. Near us was a groupe of several ladies and gentlemen, who seemed, like ourselves, come to see the pictures. One of the ladies started on hearing the exclamation; and turning round, fixed her eyes upon Walter with an expression in her countenance as if something in the sounds she had heard affected her ex-

ceedingly. Yet it was not an expression of surprise, it was rather of eager emotion; of solicitude to see who had uttered the exclamation, and of something like being struck with a tender melancholy on beholding the speaker. At first, when I saw the start only, I conceived it to be occasioned simply by the enthusiasm with which Walter had uttered his ejaculation, and which was such that it might not unreasonably excite an involuntary curiosity in every one who heard it; but the very remarkable expression with which her eyes were cast upon Walter, convinced me that she was inspired by some motive very different from, and even more impressive than, mere curiosity; that some very powerful feeling was concerned in it. After looking at him earnestly for a few moments, she seemed to think that she was trespassing against good manners, and turned away, though with evident reluctance, with an evident wish that she could, consistently with propriety, have indulged herself in continuing this examination for a longer time. I was, for my part, so much struck with her whole manner, that I could not think any more of the pictures; I was occupied solely with watching her.

We soon went up to Sir Joshua Reynolds's celebrated picture of the death of Cardinal Beaufort, as the work generally esteemed the finest

in the room. Walter was in the very excess of rapture, descanting with all the ardour natural to him upon the varied, the numberless excellencies of this admirable performance, when I again saw the same lady with her eyes fixed upon him, as if wholly absorbed in listening to what he said; in examining with an eye of the strictest scrutiny, of the deepest interest, the varied emotions of his very expressive countenance. I could not forbear, on my part, contemplating her with a curiosity no way inferior to her own; and the pictures not being new to me, as they were to Walter, they became much less the objects of my attention than she was. She appeared to be past the age of forty; perhaps approaching to fifty. I will not say that she had great *remains* of beauty, for she was still exquisitely handsome; though at her time of life it was beauty of a different description from what it might reasonably be supposed to have been in her youth. But what was perhaps most of all to be admired in her, was an air of ease and grace, yet accompanied by a dignity of manner suited to her age, which spoke at once the perfect gentlewoman;—the woman who had always lived in the most polished society. There was a young lady in the groupe; whom I observed frequently speaking to her, as if making remarks upon the pictures; which led

me to conjecture that she was her daughter, though I could not trace even the smallest resemblance to the mother. Her youth, for she appeared not more than eighteen, a fine complexion, and a pretty little figure, gave her a certain degree of attraction, and she might have passed off tolerably well in other company; but it was impossible, by the side of one so much her superior, not to make comparisons to her disadvantage, and to say, If she be the daughter, how much less an object of admiration, notwithstanding the difference of their ages, than the mother!

The lady and her party quitted the room some time before we did; but during the whole time she stayed her eyes were frequently turned towards Walter, as if she were unable to keep them from him, and once or twice methought tears seemed even ready to start into them. When she was gone, I could not forbear asking the people who were in attendance about the gallery, whether they knew that lady; but not one of them could give me any information concerning her, and I was forced to rest in the hope that some fortunate chance might at a future period elucidate this, as it now seemed, extraordinary circumstance. The impression she made upon my mind was so strong, that wherever I might meet her again, how remote soever the time and place of our meeting, or

how large soever the assemblage of persons among whom we might meet, I should instantly recognise her. It was clear that there was something in Walter which interested her very particularly ; yet it seemed equally clear that she did not know him, as she never attempted to speak to him. Whence, then, could this interest arise ? The only way in which I could solve the mystery satisfactorily to myself was, that she had perhaps lost a son of whom Walter reminded her both in his voice and countenance. Thence the start when the voice first caught her ear ; and thence that expression of tender melancholy in her countenance as she looked at him :—thence the tears which more than once seemed ready to start into her eyes. To Walter I took no notice of what I had observed, and he was too much occupied with the pictures to attend to any thing else.

We spent so much time at this place, Walter never being wearied with studying and admiring all he saw, that there was no time when we left the gallery to go any where else that morning, except to take a walk in St. James's and Hyde parks, before it was time to attend the dinner-table in Lincoln's Inn Fields. In the course of our walk, Walter, in whom our morning's occupation had revived all his former enthusiasm on the subject of painting, broke

out into many flights and sallies, similar to what I had often heard before, and assured me that the impression made upon his mind by contemplating these efforts of English genius had roused again his slumbering energies, and determined him to lose no time in commencing those studies which he hoped would enable him in future to rival at least, if not eclipse them. He would request his uncle, he said, to make the necessary arrangements the very next day, for his being placed as a pupil under any artist he would recommend; and his future steadiness in this pursuit should atone for all his former errors and volatility. He owed this, he added, alike to his own reputation, and to the kindness of his excellent father, who had made so great a sacrifice of his feelings in consenting to his following this profession. So far was well; yet I listened then, as a long experience had compelled me always to do, with doubt and hesitation as to these good resolutions being faithfully carried into effect.

I was now introduced in due form to the Shelburne family, which consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Shelburne, two daughters, and two sons. Mrs. Shelburne I had always heard celebrated as by far the handsomest of the Miss Armstrongs, and I found her answer entirely the impression I had received. She was tall; her

features were regular and fine, her figure dignified; and she had altogether something so commanding in her appearance, that she would even have filled a throne with grace, ease, and majesty. Her manners, which the nature of her education had rendered haughty in the former part of her life, chastened by adversity, had no longer in them those airs of conscious superiority which had once rendered them so offensive; her deportment was, on the contrary, evidently that of one anxious to repress every arrogant or supercilious feeling, and behave to all persons, and in all companies, with perfect ease and good-breeding. Yet the very circumstance of this anxiety, proceeding from later acquired feelings, not from those which she had originally imbibed, and which might therefore be called the most natural to her, threw an air of restraint over her manner, so that it was impossible to feel that perfect ease in her company which was felt in company with Mrs. Carberry.

Margaret was now just eighteen. I found her, as Walter had represented, very handsome, and a fine figure, strongly resembling her mother; but there was a coldness and distance in her manner, which was to me so extremely repulsive,—though indeed I do not believe this was intentional on her part,—that her

beauty would never have inspired me with the slightest degree of interest. Fanny was just turned of sixteen: she was a sprite in her figure, and by no means handsome; but so full of vivacity and animation, that she made even at first sight a much stronger impression upon me than her sister did, notwithstanding that I could not but see and acknowledge the superior beauty of the latter. Margaret must every where have excited the admiration of the eye, as a fine piece of Nature's workmanship; but Fanny was much more calculated to seize upon the heart as an object of irresistible interest and attraction. The eldest son, Henry, was now a fine youth of fourteen; the youngest, William, was only ten years of age.

We had not been long seated at table, when Mrs. Shelburne began, addressing herself to Walter,—"Well, my dear nephew, we have seen your phœnix this morning;—my sister Carberry and Katherine have been sitting with us two hours. We would fain have had them join our party at dinner; but they were expecting two gentlemen at Chatham Place, so could not give us their company."

"My dear aunt, how can you talk of my phœnix?—True, I think Katherine Middleton a most charming girl; but 'tis wronging the charms of other cousins too much to suppose

that I consider her at all in the light of a phœnix;—or, if she be one, it is certainly among the anomalies of the present day, that of this *rara avis* there is at present more than one in the world; since two other bewitching cousins that I could name, have no less a claim to be classed among these extraordinary productions of nature, or of man's more fertile imagination."

"Admirably spoken," said Mr. Shelburne. "Indeed, my dear Walter, I do not know of any young man who takes so effectual a method to cure young ladies of vanity, if they should have any propensity that way; since, paying equal admiration indiscriminately to all, none can have any pretensions to be made vain by it."

"Pshaw now, my dear uncle, you really are so severe, so disposed to turn into ridicule the unbounded devotion I feel for the lovely sex!"

"Oh no, indeed!—on the contrary, I feel the highest respect for that devotion.—Believe me, I speak very seriously when I say that it always gives me a favourable impression of a young man's heart, if I see him disposed to treat the sex with that deference and attention which every woman who conducts herself with prudence and discretion has a right to expect from us; while I am equally disposed to suspect on the other hand, when I hear a man severe in

his general censures of women, that he has himself only sought the acquaintance of the depraved part of them."

"Well then, uncle, on your own principle you must allow that I have reason for the enthusiasm with which I am always disposed to speak of this lovely part of the creation; since my happy fate has led me to have as my principal intimates among the sex, three ladies in whom you yourself must acknowledge, and as a father and uncle must proudly feel, that malice itself could scarcely find a fault, whether considered as to external charms, or to the more valuable qualities of the heart and mind."

"Of which, with regard to one at least, you are a most competent judge, having been so long, that is, for at least four-and-twenty hours, intimately acquainted with her!"

"And is it nothing that, before I had the happiness of her personal acquaintance, I knew her to be the object of universal admiration for her many amiable and excellent qualities?"

"So that the very formidable passion which has now such unbounded sway over your bosom, is not merely *love at first sight*; it may be dated still further back, and called *love by report* only. Yet how does this accord with the complaint you made last night, that report had been extremely dull upon the subject of this

same charming cousin, and never had said half so much of her as the truth would have authorized? Some rather severe animadversions were even passed upon your friend here, because he had never in his letters to you chronicled little Katherina's perfections with all that splendour of language, and brilliancy of colouring, which you observed they so decidedly merited."

O my treacherous feelings!—what a deep blush spread over my whole countenance at this remark!—I was ready to sink into the earth, nor know I how I recovered myself so far, as that the excess of my confusion passed unobserved. I wished to say something smart upon the occasion; but it seemed as if the power of combining ideas, or of articulating a word so as to give them utterance, were entirely lost, as if I were suddenly deprived both of senses and understanding. Walter, whose eyes, in consequence of what his uncle had said, were turned to me by an almost involuntary and very natural movement, seeing the deep blush on my countenance, and my downcast eyes, and nothing being more remote from his ideas than to suspect the cause, or to conceive it possible that the noticing what he saw was little better than striking a dagger into my heart, by way of retorting upon his uncle, said:

"Of which that blush confesses that he is perfectly ashamed."

"Nay," continued Mr. Shelburne, "even I did not escape a word of reflection, because I had not spoken with sufficient warmth of my niece in my letters to my wife while she was at Langham. Her old uncle, it seems, could scarcely be excused for not having been equally inflammable upon the occasion with his young nephew."

"Well," said Mrs. Shelburne, "indeed I must take Walter's side, for I do not think you said above half as much of Katherine as she deserves. A more pleasing girl, in my opinion, is not often to be seen."

"So I think most truly," said Mr. Shelburne;—"and if I have not expressed myself in my letters with sufficient warmth upon the subject, I most sincerely ask pardon both of my niece and of her champion cousin, and beg they will attribute it to the frost of age, to the pressure of business, which will not permit of my writing long letters, or to any thing but insensibility to my niece's merits. Seriously speaking, I know of few girls equal to her; and if I rallied my nephew on the enthusiasm with which he dwelt last night upon her charms, both personal and mental, I am not

in my heart the less disposed to applaud the just discernment which it evinces. And now, my dear Walter, I hope you will allow that I have made the *amende honorable.*"

"Most readily, uncle,—and I beg, in my turn, that my admiration of Katherine may not be construed into giving a preference to her above my older and no less charming acquaintance among my cousins. If last night I was led to employ my eloquence upon her, rather than upon them, it was owing principally to the astonishment with which I was impressed at having heard so little where there was room to have said so much, than that my heart was estranged by my new acquaintance from its attachment to its old ones."

"Margaret, Fanny, why don't you get up and make your manners to your cousin for such a pretty speech? I can tell you, my dear girls, 'tis such an one as you must not expect to hear every day."

"Now pray, my dear uncle, be a little more merciful, you really are too severe upon me; I shall soon be absolutely afraid of showing the least civility to my cousins when you are present. But do have the goodness to consider that I am obliged to speechify not only for myself but also for my friend here, since he does not seem inclined to say a word for himself. I

told you that he was not a speech-maker, and he seems resolved to justify the truth of my assertion."

Indeed I did sit very silent and very stupid, racked to the soul with the turn that the conversation had taken, and wishing to divert it into another channel, yet for a long time wholly unable so to detach my ideas from what was passing, as to admit of adverting to any thing else. At length, however, making a mighty effort, I accomplished what I wished, by asking Mrs. Shelburne, next whom I was sitting, some trifling question relative to Langham, which led to her and her two daughters entering into several particulars relative to their visit there; so that by degrees, the former subject being dropped, I somewhat recovered the embarrassment it had occasioned me, and acquitted myself tolerably to my satisfaction the rest of the day. From all that had passed one thing however was apparent, that Walter had been no less eloquent to his uncle, aunt, and cousins, the evening before, in praise of Katherine, than h had been to me that morning. And what was the just inference to be drawn from this? —Was it not, that the passion which he had professed for Margaret was a mere *essor de l'imagination*, while Katherine had really made a powerful impression upon his heart? A deep

sigh escaped me as I said to myself that this must certainly be so;—I was shocked and alarmed when I perceived of what I had been guilty, and resolved that it should put me on my guard to keep a more strict watch over myself in future.

Besides, in observing the general deportment of Walter and Margaret towards each other, and in pursuance of the resolution which I had made in the morning, I endeavoured to watch them as narrowly as my own disturbed thoughts would permit;—in this investigation I was well assured that the assiduous attention which my friend showed his enamorata, proceeded rather from a desire of justifying to me the professions he had made, than from really feeling what he had professed. And with regard to Margaret I was no less assured, notwithstanding the "*fair speechless messages*" which, according to the deposition of her swain, her eyes had dispatched to him, that her heart was perfectly free from any serious attachment, and that, supposing him to carry the farce so far as to make proposals, if they were accepted, it would be from any motive rather than from experiencing a reciprocity of those enthusiastic and romantic feelings which he professed for her. On the whole, therefore, this visit set me tolerably at ease with respect to the alarms

that Walter's confidential communication of the day before had excited, and I thought that at least there was no immediate occasion for making either his father, or his uncle, the sharer in those alarms.

CHAPTER X.

A specimen of epistolary writing.—Grateful aliments offered to vanity.—Matrimonial projects.—A new instance of curiosity placed on the rack.—An offering of gratitude.—The author's own character determined by himself.—Germs of misanthropy beginning to show themselves.

THE occurrences of this day unavoidably suspended for a time the prosecution of my projected letter to my father. Indeed, what between the lady at the Shakespeare Gallery, and her extraordinary attention to Walter, which had afforded me a very wide field for speculation, and the interest excited by all that had passed at Mr. Shelburne's, I had scarcely thought more of it. But the next morning when I went to my business at the compting-house, and found the scraps of paper upon which the preceding day I had noted down some memoranda for this letter, the chain of ideas which had been thus interrupted was revived in my mind with increased force, and the more I reflected upon them the more I was satisfied with the plan which I had chalked out to myself, the more was I determined to put it in execution. Yet as this same letter must be well considered, it could not be written in a

hurry; some days must be taken to mature and arrange my ideas upon the subject, to settle my mind as to my final determination. Besides, I felt that the first step to be taken, according to my notions of propriety, was to mention the subject to Mrs. Carberry; and how I should ever assume courage to do that, I was wholly at a loss to conjecture. She, I was conscious, must be exceedingly surprised at this apparent levity and capriciousness in the conduct of one who had been considered hitherto as remarkable for steadiness and solidity, and would probably in consequence be induced to ask questions which it would be very difficult for me to answer.

For several days I continued in this dilemma, not at all shaken in my purpose as to what should be done ultimately, but extremely embarrassed about the means by which my ends were to be accomplished without creating suspicions of the truth;—and that was what above all things I was desirous to avoid:—indeed I dreaded nothing so much as the truth being suspected;—the remotest idea that it was so, would have been the signal for my flying the sight of the whole family of Armstrong for ever. For the first time since I had been in Mr. Carberry's service I omitted dining at his table on the Sunday;—for the first time

since I had been in my new situation, a whole long week elapsed without my seeing any of the family in Chatham Place, Mr. Carberry excepted, to whom I had once been sent for on business. I however flattered myself, that my absenting myself from their society might be imputed to Walter's being in town, and that I might be supposed engaged entirely with him in my hours of leisure; and though this, I might have been sensible, could operate only as a temporary solution of so great a change, yet at the moment I was glad of any thing which might give a specious appearance to what I felt could never be altogether satisfactorily accounted for.

In the midst of these embarrassments, I received the following letter from my father, which I venture, though somewhat long, to present to the reader *verbatim et literatim*, trusting that he will not be displeased at being presented with a specimen of the epistolary style of one, whom he must already have acknowledged in his own mind to have been an extraordinary character for his situation in life. I may perhaps be thought liable to the charge of vanity in inserting it, considering the flattering manner in which I am myself mentioned; if I should, I have only to answer in the words of the learned Tissot:—" If vanity too

often disposes many to speak of themselves, there are occasions in which a studied silence might be supposed to result from a much higher degree of it."

'DEAR SAM,

'This is with mine and your dear mother's kind love to you, and we thank God for the good and agreeable accounts that you send us about yourself and your new situation. To be sure we have all great reason to be thankful for the kindness shown you by Mr. and Mrs. Carberry, and to pray God that he may continue to make you worthy of it, that you may be a blessing to them as well as to my good old dame and myself. And Mr. and Mrs. Fenton too, it is a great pleasure to hear that you are placed in a situation with such worthy people, and can make your meals comfortably with them and their daughters. And let me tell you, Sam, I don't think it such a bad thing that you are put in the way of those two young ladies, which they are both of them just exactly of an age when they are very likely to take a fancy to a comely young man, as every body must acknowledge you to be. And this is not my own opinion only, but our good squire Mr. Conway, he have been down here for a few days, though you know, Sam, this isn't his usual time for coming; but there was

somewhat to be done about letting a new lease of that there farm as he bought last which you know the lease is near expiring, and the old gentleman that's in it now he doesn't think of renewing, and as he haven't any children, so there's nobody in particular to take it, and so as it wasn't wronging any body, which to be sure I never in my life wished to wrong nobody, I was a thinking for to ask Squire Conway to let me have it. So I says to my old dame, Hannah, says I, don't you think, says I, that it would be a good thing for us? says I; and I dare say, says I, that if Mr. Armstrong, which you know how kind he have always been to us, and says I, I dare say, says I, if he asks Squire Conway, that the thing will be done; for to be sure he'll never refuse any thing that Mr. Armstrong asks. But Hannah she was not of my mind; for, Look ye, Bob, says she, it's my thought that good is good, and sometimes people make themselves worse thinking to be better; and for my part, if we take the farm I must give up the shop, for 'tis unpossible that I can ever attend to both, being that you know there'd be the dairy for me to look after, and I might be called away a hundred times while I was churning, which you know then that never could make good butter; and you know, Bob, says she, what a power

of money we have made of the shop, being that we have now had it all to ourselves going on of twenty years, and mayhap we may never make so much of the farm. So, Well, says I, as you please, says I, for I don't know for that matter why it isn't as hard work to husband a farm rightly as to go on with my old trade. So we never said any thing at all about it either to Mr. Armstrong or Squire Conway.

'But Squire Conway, he was down here; so one of his coach-horses was ill, and he sends for me promiscuously, which I subscribed for the horse, and thank God he is now quite well. So Squire Conway he was a-talking to me about what was the matter with the horse, and when we had done talking about that, Danville, says he in the most kind and friendly-like way possible, Danville, says he, how does your son do? says he.—Thank your honour, says I, he was very well when I heard of him last, says I. What then he is not with you now? says he. No, your honour, says I, he's gone to his employment in London. In London? says he, why I thought he was to be brought up to the church. So I did think, to be sure, your honour, says I, but he couldn't take a fancy to it himself, which it appeared to me very odd, since I should have thought, seeing what an extraordinary good man Mr. Arm-

strong is, and how he is respected by every body, that Sam must have wished of all things to be like him; but somehow or other he couldn't fancy the church; so I thought I had no right to force him to be a clergyman, and so Mr. Armstrong thought too; and so instead of being a clergyman he's gone to learn the coal trade under good Mr. Armstrong's brother-in-law Mr. Carberry, as married Miss Eleanor, after she was a widow, for perhaps your honour may remember that she was first married to Mr. Middleton's son the minister of Ambresbury; so Sam is gone to learn the coal trade; and if he do but behave himself well, why there's great reason to hope that Mr. Carberry will always be kind to him, and that he may make a fortune in God's good time.

'Indeed I'm very glad to hear he's in so good a way, says Squire Conway, and perhaps he have chosen better for himself than going into the church, at least he's much more likelier to make a fortune, for I have no doubt, Danville, that your son will always be a steady young man and apply to his business. I was very much pleased with him when I saw him one day at Mr. Armstrong's, the last time I was down here. I had never seen him before since he quitted the hospital, and at first I really didn't know him, he was so much altered by his

change of dress. He is indeed grown a very fine young man, and I never saw greater propriety of behaviour in any one, quite the ease of a gentleman without any thing forward or presuming. Well, Danville, I sincerely hope he'll succeed, and repay by his dutiful affection to you and his mother all that you have done for him; and indeed I have no doubt that he will do so.

'This was what Squire Conway said to me, and I'm sure I can't be mistaken in his words, for I was so delighted that somehow or other I could not for the life of me forbear to feel a little watering in my eye; for you know, Sam, that sometimes great pleasure will make us cry, as well as sorrow, and you may think what a pleasure it was to me to hear Squire Conway talk thus; so when I went home I told it all to my good old dame, and then we couldn't help both crying together. To be sure, Sam, I always did think before this that it was just as Squire Conway said;—that is, I knew very well that you were a good lad, for I never had any reason to find fault with you except for one thing, and that you know, Sam, I never talk about, only that I must just mention it now, because it would not be true to say that I never knew you guilty of any fault, but that is the only one: but, besides this, I did al-

ways think to myself that you were a comely lad, and looked quite like a gentleman, only I was afraid that perhaps I might think so because I was your father, and one can't help sometimes thinking better of one's children than other people do. But I've often said to your mother as you were growing up to be a man, I do think, says I, that Sam grows a very likely lad, and may one day be a great favourite with the lasses; and Hannah, she always said that she thought so too, nay, she talked more about it than I did. But now that Squire Conway without my saying a word to him, which to be sure I never should have thought of being so disrespectful, says that he thinks you *a very fine young man*, for these were his very words, and I'm sure I'm not mistaken, being that they delighted me so, and I am therefore sure that it is true, and not mine and my old dame's fancy only.

'Therefore, my dear Sam, I would have you look well about you, for there's many a young man have got forward mainly in the world by pleasing the lasses, and you say that 'tis thought that Mr. Fenton will give his daughters five or six thousand pound a piece, which to be sure that is a very pretty fortune for a young man going into business, and might be a great help to setting you up for yourself. Besides, as

Mr. Fenton has been such a number of years in Mr. Carberry's service, and been such a faithful good servant, Mr. Carberry must wish to show him some favour, and Mrs. Carberry she have such a wish to serve you for her dear brother's sake; so who knows, if you should marry one of Mr. Fenton's daughters, but Mr. Carberry might be willing to favour you, both for his sake and your own, and take you into partnership with only laying down a thousand or two of pounds, and then there'd be plenty besides to furnish your house, and set you up in housekeeping, and do a hundred odd things that's wanted to make people appear like gentlefolks, and somewhat to lay by into the bargain? and I am sure it would be such a joy to my old dame and me to see you happily married, and to dandle a little grandchild upon our knees. But, my dear Sam, I only mean if you can like the lass, for I'm sure, God forbid that I should wish you to marry against your liking! which it is not only a very disagreeable thing, but to my thinking a very wicked thing; for don't we swear to love her till death us do part? and how can we swear that if we don't love her at all? Only if you could like one of the Miss Fentons, and she could like you, which I think there is all the reason in the world to expect that either of

them could, why then I think it would be no such bad thing for both; so I earnestly recommend you to consider about it, and observe and see, and when you have made up your mind, then you can speak to whichever you choose.

'But now, my dear Sam, I have another piece of news to tell you, which it is a very extraordinary thing indeed, and I can't for the life of me get it out of my head, for I never was so surprised since I've been my father's son, and so will you be too, I'm sure. There was a gentleman came to Langham about a fortnight agone, a sort of a limner like or a master builder, I suppose, or something of that there kind, for he goes about the country looking at churches and making pictures of 'em, and they say he has been almost all over England for nothing else but the very same, and his name is Westbourne. So he came to look at Langham church, which you know, since Squire Conway had it spruced up at Mr. Armstrong's desire, it is quite a different thing from what it was before, and as neat a pretty church as ever you shall see in a country village. So I being clerk he comes to me promiscuously to show it to him, and he looks all about, and pries into every hole and corner, and goes down into the vault where all Squire

Conway's family lies, and looks at all the coffins, and inquires all about 'em; he couldn't have asked more questions if they'd been all his own kinsfolk. So then at last we comes to the monument that Mr. Armstrong put up for his poor wife, which you know there is a lady lolling upon a kind of a bason like with a cover, and she seems to fare very moloncolly as if she was crying; so he looks at it and says, That is a very fine piece of—and then he said some hard word which I suppose that gentlefolks understand it very well, but I being only a working man didn't understand it, only it sounded almost like Scripture; but I don't think it could be that neither, unless mayhap he thought that the lady a-crying was somebody out of Scripture, which to be sure I don't think she can be, because I know Scripture pretty well, as well as most folks, I believe, and I'm sure there's no where there any thing about a lady lolling upon a bason and crying; so I don't suppose it was Scripture that Mr. Westbourne said, though it sounded quite like it.

'Well, so then he reads the inscription, and when he reads Sophia, the wife of the Rev. Bernard Armstrong, Oh! says he, so that's a monument to your rector's wife; and then he reads that it was put up by her husband out of

respect for her memory. Yes, says he, and I suppose he did respect her memory, and no doubt if he had died first she would equally have respected his memory; though perhaps if she had known all that is known to other people her respect might have been somewhat lessened; he might be a good man in the main; 'tis fortunate for his general character that some parts of his conduct are very little known. Indeed, sir, says I, I beg pardon for contradicting a gentleman, but to be sure I can't help thinking that your honour has made a mistake; for as to Mr. Armstrong, I don't think that there ever was a better man, or one that's more respected; and to be sure they have a good right to respect him, for nobody ever did more good to all his friends and all the parish, and every body that ever had any thing to do with him. This was what I made bold to say; but he takes me up quite short, Aye, aye, says he, I dare say he has been a very good parish priest, and done a great deal of good among his parishioners; to do him justice, I must say that I have always heard so. Indeed I have heard much good of him in various ways; one part of his conduct was however very bad, every body blamed him for it, and it was impossible that any thing could excuse it;—his general good character, indeed, only made his

misconduct in this instance appear the more unpardonable. I trust, however, that he afterwards repented of his error; indeed, if report is to be believed, he had reason to repent it. Perhaps that was a merciful dispensation of Providence; and having had his punishment here, it may be hoped that his offence will not be remembered against him hereafter.

'I don't know that I ever was so astounded in all my life as to hear any body talk in such an extraornary way, and ever since I have not been able to get it out of my mind. I can't for the life of me think, Sam, what he could mean: as to Mr. Armstrong ever doing any thing wrong, I don't believe a word of it; but I didn't think it was becoming in me downright to contradict a gentleman, so I said no more about it; indeed for that matter I was so astounded that I seemed somehow as if it was impossible for me to speak. Nobody shall persuade me but that this is some vile falshood as somebody has gone and reported of him out of mere malice; but even the best can't always have justice done 'em here; and as to saying any thing about hereafter, that is what none of us have a right to do; and I did not think it very fitting of Mr. Westbourne, whatever his thoughts might be, for to talk about punishment; it's well for him, for all his preambles and shaking

of his head, if no worse can ever be said of him than of dear good Mr. Armstrong; and I hope it will please God in his good time to change his thoughts, and make him think of Mr. Armstrong as every body ought to think, and not talk any more about punishment.

'But I should like to know what he could mean; for as to poor Miss Sophia's dying for love of him as some people thinks, that couldn't be no fault of his, and I can't think neither that he could mean that, for how should people such a long way off? and they say he comes out of Shropshire, which I think by the map it must be a great way off,—for when I heard that he came out of Shropshire, I looked at the map of England as you give me, for there it hangs in our kitchen, and I like to see it because it reminds me of my dear boy—so I looks at it and says to my old dame, Hannah, says I, this gentleman with all his conundrums must have come a good long journey, for see here is Langham where we are, and there is Shropshire.—Aye, says Hannah, says she, and better have stayed at home truly, than come such a long way to tell his tarradiddles here, which howsever nobody won't believe.—So I think too, says I, and I'm sure, God forgive me if it be a wicked thought! but I'm ready to wish that he might have nothing else but his own

tarradiddles to eat for a week. And plenty of victuals too, I think, says Hannah, if he tells as big ones at other places as he told here.—So then we both laughed, notwithstanding that we was both so angry. But I can't think neither, Sam, that such a long way off people could know any thing of what was said about poor Miss Sophia and he: and for that matter, if they could, I don't see how any body was to be blamed for it; for as soon as Mr. Armstrong did begin to think that she was dying for love of him, he married her in hopes of curing her; and how could he think of marrying her before he knew any thing at all about it? We may be sure, if he had known it sooner, that such a good man as he would never have let her pine and hurt her health; so if this was what Mr. Westbourne meant, I'm sure he had no right to talk about it in such an exuberant way.

'My dear Sam, I have wrote a very long letter; but I think you will always be glad to read what your poor father writes, though he isn't no matters of a scholar, and never think it any trouble to read it, if it should be ten times as long. But your mother she had got a very fine turkey, the finest fat cock bird as she have killed this year, and she thinks there won't be another so fine the whole season, so she had

a great mind to send it to Mrs. Carberry,, and she begs you will give it to her with her duty, and she hopes that lady won't think it too presuming, to desire her acceptance of it; for we have all great reason to be thankful to her and Mr. Carberry for their goodness to you, and to pray God that you may always be deserving of it, as I don't doubt you will. So as there was a basket to go, and you wouldn't have to pay for a double letter, I thought I might say all that I had a mind, and tell you all the news: and as to what Mr. Westbourne said about dear good Mr. Armstrong, I dare say you won't be pleased any more than my old dame and I, and won't be able to get it out of your head any more than we are. So I told Mr. Armstrong, as we was going to send Mrs. Carberry a turkey, which I hoped he wouldn't think it too great a liberty, and if he had any thing to put in the basket there'd be plenty of room; so he said he thought it a pity to rob ourselves, which I answered that it would be the greatest pleasure to us if Mrs. Carberry would accept it, more a great deal than three times the money it was worth. So then Mr. Armstrong said he would write a letter to young Mr. Walter, which hereby I enclose; and I do assure you, Sam, it would quite do your heart good to see how much better

Mr. Armstrong is, than when you went away, and t'other day he walked as far as my house and was quite not at all the worse for it.. So no more at present from, dear Sam,

'Your ever loving father and mother,

'ROBERT and HANNAH DANVILLE.'

"So then I am not mistaken in my conjectures!" said I, throwing the letter rather pettishly upon the table as I finished reading it;—"I thought the world never could permit me to be in the daily habit of seeing these girls without determining that I must be saddled with one of them for life. But with the world's permission, and with that of my good and respected father, I shall beg leave to decline this very eligible match which he and they are so willing to provide for me—I desire to be allowed at least the privilege of a dissentient voice in this matter;—if I cannot have the woman whom I would choose for myself, I will never take one that is chosen for me by others."—And the more effectually to put a stop to this folly, (for I regarded the idea of my marrying one of the Miss Fentons the very height of folly,) I resolved to lose no time in taking the proper measures for quitting the situation which had given occasion to it.

Here too I found an additional reason for pursuing my idea of immuring myself for life

within the walls of a college: the society of the Miss Fentons, who really were otherwise good sort of girls, became positively irksome to me; and that life of collegiate solitude which I once regarded with so much horror, now appeared the only refuge presented to my choice to escape from a maze of perplexities. Yet there was one thing more to be thought of;—could I lightly abandon, from mere selfish motives, the charge which Mr. Armstrong had laid upon me?—Where was all my boasted gratitude for his kindness, if, at the first moment that any thing intervened to cross and discompose me, I was to quit a situation in which he seemed to think that I might be useful to his son?

This was indeed an idea not to be disregarded: and then taking a serious review of my whole conduct, I determined that selfishness was the prevailing feature of my character, and that I was now justly punished for it. Had I not listened rather to my own personal feelings than to the duty I owed my parents, I had never found myself in this mortifying situation. My intimacy with Katherine having been once interrupted, if we had remained in the same state of separation from each other, I should have continued indifferent to her, I should perhaps never have thought of her

more; at any rate, as a college student, it would have been so utterly impossible for me to engage in a matrimonial connexion, that no one could have thought of tormenting me upon the subject. But here another question arose: Was it true that separated from Katherine I had felt that perfect indifference for her? —To resolve this matter, a strict examination of my heart must be entered upon. And here I presently discovered, that from the first moment when I entertained the idea of being placed in Mr. Carberry's service, I had thought with extreme pleasure that Katherine and I could then pursue our studies together. I even discovered, that though this had never been one among the many excellent and solid reasons urged by me either to Mr. Armstrong or my father for abandoning the church, I had, after every conversation with the former, in which he seemed to favour my ideas, concluded my subsequent reflections upon it with thinking, that if all should at length end according to my wishes, I should once more become both the pupil and instructor of Katherine. I even thought, as I advanced in my investigation, that I began to perceive a cause for my dislike of a college life, which I had never before suspected; viz. that the lectures which it was necessary I should attend there, were not given by a lec-

turer to whom I listened with equal pleasure as to my lecturer in Chatham Place.

It seemed then clear that even here I had been playing the hypocrite, and that the reason which above all others influenced my secret wishes was precisely that which I had never thought proper to bring forwards: here was another subject on which I could not dwell with any self-satisfaction. On the whole, I found myself grow every day more and more gloomy and unsocial in my mind;—I dreaded to see Katherine, because I felt that I could never again see her but with an eye of the most heart-rending jealousy;—I dreaded to see Mrs. Carberry, because she was the mother of Katherine;—I dreaded to see Walter, because in the first place I thought I must consider him as the lover of Katherine, and in the next place, I was afraid he would plague me about the Miss Fentons;—I dreaded to see the Fenton family, because I had been plagued about them; I even dreaded a letter from my father, lest he should again tease me upon this subject. I had a great mind indeed to write him a letter of reproof, and beg, in rather an imperious manner, that he would never plague me about such nonsense again; for the Miss Fentons were by no means either of them a suitable match for me, though they might have a few dirty thousands to their fortune.

Even in the poor turkey I found a subject of offence; I felt that it would only be a proper piece of respect to call myself upon Mrs. Carberry to announce it, and I was not in a humour to pay this respect;—I was therefore angry that it was required of me. Vainly did I endeavour to summon up resolution for the purpose; I found it impossible, so wrote a very silly note which I sent with the bird to Chatham Place, though I would much more gladly have sent both to the bottom of the Thames. I had thought of excusing myself on the score of illness, and a pretence of that kind would also have been an excuse for absenting myself some days from the Fentons' table, and remaining entirely in my own room; but then I was afraid of Mrs. Carberry's coming to see me, perhaps even of Katherine's accompanying her. I could not say that there was any very particular business in the compting-house to prevent my coming out, for that Mr. Carberry would have known to be a fiction: the best excuse I could find was, that it was necessary to answer my father's letter immediately, and diffusely, and I was apprehensive, if I had called in Chatham Place, that I should not have had time to get my letter finished for that day's post.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S THE TANJORE MAHAL.

CHAPTER XI.

A fashionable scene in Hyde Park.—A shocking instance of plebeian presumption.—Severe denunciations against it.—Extraordinary magnanimity shown by a man of rank.—An interesting conversation.—Another not less interesting in elucidation of the former.—Curiosity not satisfied, and mystery rendered doubly mysterious.

A SECOND Sunday was now arrived since I had fallen into this misanthropic state, when I resolved to try the effect of a walk in Hyde Park. I was in hopes that the breathing something like country air might perhaps brace my nerves, and inspire me with fortitude sufficient to make my appearance afterwards at the dinner-table in Chatham Place; at least, I was resolved to try the experiment. During this interval I had seen Walter only once, when he called to let me know that he was actually fixed as a pupil under the most eminent painter in London,—that he was more than ever delighted with the profession,—that his affair with Margaret he trusted was in a most promising train,—and finally, that there was not a being upon earth happier than himself. I did not hear this information with all the satisfaction which at the first glance parts of it, at least, seemed cal-

culated to inspire; in whatever related to Walter I could not help entertaining doubts as to the permanence of any flattering appearances, which made me always view them with a mixture of pain, nearly, if not entirely, equal to the pleasure they conveyed.

I bent my course then to Hyde Park, when on entering by the gate at the end of Piccadilly I found a vast crowd already assembled there, and others running from all parts to join it, so that it increased every moment. Into the cause of this I was very naturally led to inquire, when the man to whom I addressed myself replied: "Oh, no great matter, only some of your bang-up gentry got a quarrelling. One of your hit-or-miss chaps had a mind to show off, and *hit* has been the word with him now. He's got one of your fine tandems there; and the horses seem to know how to manage him better than he knows how to manage the horses. The leader had got into the park before the other horse and the chay had got above half-way down Piccadilly, and there he runned agen the leaders of one of your four-in-hand chaps, and knocked one of the horses down: and so there has been such a jawing among them all, and coachy says he'd rather a been knocked down himself. And then there's a lady sitting by him on the box; and to my thinking she seems

to rag and jaw as well as the best he among'em all."

I had enough of John Bull in me, notwithstanding the paroxysm of misanthropy under which I was labouring, to wish to see a little more of the fun, so pressed forward to the very centre of action, where I discovered, to my no small entertainment, in the person of the unfortunate tandem-driver, neither more nor less than the great Maurice Carberry himself. He was recently arrived from Cambridge, with all the *new-blown honours* he had acquired at taking his degree fresh upon him; but I, in consequence of having absented myself so entirely from Chatham Place, was not aware of his arrival till I now saw him in this situation of delicate distress. Just as I came up with the disputants, I heard the fair Amazon on the barouche-box address her companion, the coachman as I supposed,—"Give me the ribbands, Tom, and do you get down and give the fellow a milling. What! does he think that we are to be kept here all day, while he is trying to show off and extricate himself? He'd fain be a prime, but he has no more notion of it than any of the mob that are gaping at him. Get down, I say, Tom; first pull the horse away, whether the more senseless animal his master will or not, and then give the fellow a taste of your mufflers."

So saying, she snatched the reins out of Tom's hands, and, flourishing the whip with a true coachman-like air and grace, gave her companion a push which made him reel on his seat, and forced him to descend whether he would or not.

Maurice was all this time whipping and lashing his unfortunate leader, prohibiting in a very peremptory tone the crowd around to give him any assistance, though he was wholly unable to surmount his difficulties by his own unaided dexterity. But no sooner had John Bull caught the sound of a milling, than he would be controlled no longer, and insisted that the tandem-driver should descend to meet the barouche-driver, and fight the matter out fairly. Maurice, however, still continued to lash his horses, and swear a number of very pretty fashionable driving oaths, not seeming very willing to accede to the general demand that the oratory of the tongue should be exchanged for that of the fists. Tom, in the mean time, who did not at first seem more disposed than the count to enter into a manual controversy, now perceiving his antagonist not more eager for it than himself, assumed courage, and, boldly stepping forward, put himself in a menacing attitude, and challenged Sir Tandem, as he called him, to a round or two. This was an invitation which Maurice

wholly declined accepting, asserting that it was not for a man of fashion to enter the lists with a blackguard coachman :—but the crowd insisted that rank was nothing in this case: besides, there was no knowing what the rank of the barouche-driver might be, since gentlemen and coachmen were now-a-days all dressed alike, and one might therefore be as good a gentleman as the other. They even began taking compulsory measures to make the young merchant descend from his tandem, and take his proper station in the ring which they were forming.

His situation was now really become so embarrassing, between the unruliness of his horses and the still greater unruliness of the multitude, that it began even to excite my compassion; and I magnanimously determined, setting aside all my former causes of offence against his countship, to step boldly forward as his champion. Assuming, therefore, a fierce and martial air, and displaying at once all my science in pugilism, which amounted just to knowing how to double my fist for striking, I offered to take up the challenge, and fight as the gentleman's substitute; to which I observed no reasonable objection could be made, since my antagonist was only the champion of another, and if one side could be permitted to fight by deputy, the same privilege could not in justice be

denied to the other. My proposal was received with great applause, and many compliments were paid by the crowd both to the sentiments I had uttered, and the spirit I had displayed; and they very readily consented to my fighting the gentleman's battle, probably from my more muscular form and athletic appearance hoping for better sport than if he had fought *in propria persona*. The consent was accompanied with the observation, that indeed the gentleman seemed to want somebody to fight for him more than the lady, for to their thinking she was much more of a man than he. Some even proposed, that when the combat of the deputies was decided, the principals should come forward, and offered to back *miss* against *master* two to one.

But the same reasons which rendered the antagonist now offered more acceptable to the multitude, rendered him less so to Mr. Thomas, viz. his greater corporeal powers. Though still, therefore, encouraged by the lady, who did indeed appear as if she would have fought with the more energy of the two, he no sooner saw my clenched fists, and found that, if his prowess was to be displayed, it must be against me instead of Sir Tandem, than he slunk away; and hastily reascending the box, snatched the ribbands not very politely out of the fair hands that held them; then giving his horses a smart

lash, the carriages being now entirely disengaged, in spite of the warm remonstrances made by his Amazonian companion, away he drove; the crowd being extremely liberal in the flowers of popular rhetoric which they sent after him for his sneaking and cowardly behaviour. Maurice had been hitherto too deeply occupied with his delicate distresses to be able even to look round and see who the champion might be that had come so opportunely to his rescue. But now released from all anxiety upon the beloved leader's account, as well as fear for his own safety, he had leisure to inform himself more fully upon the subject; when recognising me, his deliverance seemed scarcely any longer a matter of joy, seeing to whom he owed it. "O dear, Mr. Denville, is it you?" he said. "Well, who could ever thought of it! To be sure this is very extraordinary!"—and without more ceremony he too gave his horses a lash, and away he drove. A second volley of rhetoric, not less emphatic than the former, was now sent after him, for going off in such a sneaking blackguard way, without saying one civil thing to the gentleman who had been so kind to him; and it was the worse, because it appeared that they were already acquainted. My spirit was, on the contrary, the theme of universal admiration; and I proceeded on my

walk, while the air was rent with the cheers and acclamations that accompanied me as I moved forwards.

Arrived at Kensington gate, I debated a few moments with myself, whether I should then measure back my steps or proceed further. But I thought that the air was pleasant, that I felt it reviving, that I breathed more freely than I had done for a long time, and that the prolongation of my walk would be of essential benefit to me. I pursued my course, therefore, along the road, till insensibly to myself I had got as far as Kew; when I found that it would be impossible, even by the utmost exertion of my locomotive powers, to get back to Chatham Place by dinner. Nothing then remained but to eat my beef-steak at Kew, look about me there, and return. This was what I did, perfectly satisfied in my own mind, that it was now accident and not design which had detained me from my usual Sunday resort.

From all my former experience of Count Maurice's dispositions towards me, I had no reason to expect, nor had I any expectation, that he would ever give himself any trouble about making me the acknowledgements which some people may think were due for the assistance I had afforded him. I even thought it probable that he would be more chagrined at

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it must have belonged to a Countess Dowager by the coronet and the arms in a lozenge, consequently that you could have no pretension whatever to concern yourself with the metter."

"Pardon me, Mr. Carberry, but indeed I am very little of a herald: having no pretensions either to arms or a coronet myself, I never much troubled myself with studying the distinctions pointed out by them, and might very probably, even though I had examined the carriage ever so accurately, not have been better informed as to the rank of its owner. Besides, you will not be offended I hope if I observe, that it was impossible for me ever to suppose you could be guilty of such a breach of the respect and deference due to rank, as to peg a Countess Dowager's barouche. Though here, again, I am perhaps only obtruding my plebeian notions. Possibly the honour of being thrashed by an Earl's son is so great, that it was worth being purchased even at the expense of transgressing in a slight degree against the strict rules of etiquette. If such was your hope, I will readily acknowledge that he by whom it was frustrated can have no claim whatever to expect your forgiveness."

"As to what concerns myself only, Mr. Denville, I am very ready freely to pardon your offence, even without any apology being

made on your part; but I am sorry to say that the Countess Dowager, and the Earl of Borrowdale my intimate friend, and the two Lady Cliftons, and the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour, are all so extremely indignant at what passed, that I know not whether it will be possible to appease them by any apology you can make. The Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour even threatens to bring an ection against you for the menacing lenguage you used towards him."

"Indeed I cannot say how much pain it gives me to have fallen under the displeasure of so honourable a personage. But you have then seen the parties, I suppose, Mr. Carberry?"—I must confess that this question was prompted principally by a kind of satirical curiosity. I knew that hitherto the Earl of Borrowdale's house in Portman Square had been a fortress inaccessible to our young merchant, and that the Earl had never been able to extend his travels so far as Chatham Place, and I therefore could not help inwardly speculating how an interview between these two friends had at length been brought about.

My curiosity was not detained many seconds on the rack, for the count, too happy in telling his story, answered eagerly:—"Seen them! —can that be doubted?—No, I am too well

aware what is due to persons of their renk. The moment I was made sensible of the error into which I had inadvertently fallen, I wrote a note to my old friend the Earl of Borrowdale, making every possible apology for what had passed; and saying that if it would not be construed into too great presumption, I would wait upon the ladies myself to make my apologies in person. I received a most polite enswer, stating how much the whole party were satisfied with my behaviour throughout the affair, and how happy they should be to see me in Portman Square, not for the purpose of making the apologies at which I hinted, for where no offence was given no apologies were requisite, but for the extreme pleasure they should receive from my company. I accordingly went, and was received in the most obliging manner possible; the ladies were even so condescending as to say that they should always consider the adventure a particularly fortunate one, since it had procured them the felicity of my acquaintance; and on my taking leave I was favoured with a general invitation to visit there at all times upon the most sociable footing. But against you, Mr. Denville, they are all excessively incensed."

I could not help here speculating in my own mind, whether I might not be much rather in-

debted for the count's present visit, to an irresistible desire of circulating the important and joyful tidings that he was admitted as a visitor at the Countess Dowager's, than to the laudable motive which he affected of wishing to make peace between me and his new friends. "Indeed, Mr. Carberry," I replied, "it wounds me most sensibly to think that I should have fallen under the displeasure of persons of such high rank and fashion, for doing what I confess I had, erroneously as it appears, supposed a common act of humanity from one fellow creature to another: yet allow me to remark, that it is surely rather beneath their dignity to waste their indignation upon so obscure, so insignificant a being as myself. If, however, the Honourable Mr. Thomas Molesworth Seymour does pursue his intention of calling me before a court of justice, I must meet the stroke with all the fortitude that I can summon to my aid, and make the best defence in my power."

"Defence, Mr. Denville!—I hope you would not think of defending your conduct."

"Indeed I own that it will be very presumptuous to do so."

"Hear me, Mr. Denville.—Though I think your conduct wholly inexcusable in this matter, yet from the long experience I have had of the Earl of Borrowdale's truly amiable dis-

position, I have little doubt that if a proper apology were made on your part, he would prevent any further proceedings against you. Or, if the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour cannot be prevailed with to drop the prosecution entirely, I think I may take upon myself to say, that by pleading Guilty at once, and saving a person of his renk any further trouble, then his honour being satisfied by your submission, he would even condescend to intercede with the court in mitigation of whatever punishment the law would inflict."

"That would be vastly kind and condescending indeed; a magnanimity of conduct truly worthy of so honourable a personage; and there is no doubt that in a question between the son of an Earl and a coal-merchant's clerk, it would be the most becoming in the latter to give the former as little trouble as possible. But, Mr. Carberry, I have been educated in odd notions, as you seem, if I may judge from the hints you just now gave me, more than once to have remarked; and I must candidly confess, odd as it may appear, that I do not feel exceedingly disposed, even in compliment to so great a personage as the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour, to confess myself guilty when I do not feel myself so. These may possibly be very plebeian notions; but since

you have warned me that my education, though superior to my birth, does not authorize me to act in a manner inconsistent with my origin, you cannot be offended, how plebeian soever they may be, if they should be those upon which I act."

"Then you would give the lie to the son of a Lord;—for 'tis nothing better, to say yo are not guilty, when he says you are."

"This is unlucky, I confess. But how i it should happen that twelve jurymen should say the same thing?"

"Oh, I'm sure that's impossible!—the jury must see at once which side is in the right; and you may then perhaps wish too late that you had listened to my friendly counsel, and softened instead of irritating the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour's enger."

"I am afraid, Mr. Carberry, that in your progress through life you will meet with many others no less foolish and refractory than myself, by whom your counsels, though equally kind and friendly, will be equally despised."

"Well, Mr. Denville, I would gledly have interposed my good offices to draw you out o a very disagreeable affair; but if you will be so much your own enemy, it is impossible for me to be your friend. Out of regard to me the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour wa

disposed to act with lenity towards you; and I condescended to interest myself on your behalf, from respect to my father and Mrs. Carberry, well knowing how much they would be hurt at seeing the affair brought to extremities; at seeing one to whom so large a share of their patronage has been extended, appear as a culprit before the tribunals of his country."

"I acknowledge my obligations, Mr. Carberry, for the very kind interest you have *condescended* to take in my behalf, and am only sorry that it has been lavished on one so little deserving of it."

"And you really will neither make an apology, nor plead guilty to the charge?"

"Really."

"Then it will be impossible for me to say another word in your favour to the parties offended."

"Indeed, Mr. Carberry, I am not more desirous of your interference in my concerns than you are of my interference in yours. So here, if you please, this colloquy may be concluded."

"This is strange blindness to your own interests, Mr. Denville, and so good morning."

"Good morning to you, sir;"—and he quitted the room, appearing extremely mortified and disappointed.

He had scarcely been gone five minutes when in came Walter, laughing so heartily, that, though ignorant of the subject of his merriment, I could not forbear sympathetically joining the laugh. "Sam," said he, "I'm heartily sorry I did not come half an hour sooner; I would have given the world to have been present at a conference which I suppose you have had with Count Maurice. I met him coming out of the coal-yard as I came into it, and conclude he has made you the condescending visit which he has been talking of for the last two or three days."

"He certainly has been here."

"And came with a modest proposal that you should apologize for an affair in which, according to his own account, it does not appear that you were very much in the wrong?"

"Even so.—But you know then the general outline of the adventure?"

"As far as this.—On your not appearing last Sunday at the dinner-table in Chatham Place, (whither, by the way, Sir Steady, I went in full expectation of meeting you,) many speculations were made as to what could occasion your absence a second Sunday, and aunt Carberry really seemed somewhat hurt at it. Count Maurice, hearing all this, began by saying that you had got into rather a disagreeable scrape in the morning, in Hyde Park,

which had no doubt prevented your coming; indeed, after what had passed, you might, perhaps not unnaturally, be somewhat ashamed of making your appearance. At this there was a general start among the company; aunt Carberry looked chagrined, Katherine coloured, which added great additional lustre to her charms, and I felt horribly stewed. Uncle Carberry was the only one who seemed able to find the power of speech upon the occasion, and he said: 'How so, Maurice?—I should not have thought Sam Danville a likely man to be getting into scrapes in Hyde Park.'—'No great matter,' said Maurice, 'in itself, only rendered of some importance from its being persons of rank with whom he has unfortunately involved himself.'—'Persons of rank!' says uncle Carberry: 'well, but the particulars:'—and I saw with pleasure that he seemed really anxious to know the history, from taking a deep interest in whatever concerned you. Maurice then gave us the following relation.

"'Why, the particulars, sir, are, that as I was going into Hyde Park this morning in my new tendem, my leader somehow took fright, and before I was aware of it, so as to hold him in, he ran against the horses of a barouche and knocked one of them down, which greatly incensed the gentleman on the box, and

some rather unpleasant altercation took place. All however would probably soon have been settled, and no material consequences ensued, but that unfortunately Mr. Denville came up at that moment, and seeing that I was one of the parties concerned, seemed to think it his duty as a servant in the family to interfere: in doing so, he even challenged the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour, second son of the Earl of Molesworth, to box with him;— though, in justice to Mr. Denville, it must be said that I believe he did not know whom he was challenging, and thought it had been only the coachman. But the affair is likely, I am afraid, to have unpleasant consequences, as some people with whom I was talking afterwards, and who were present at the affair, said that the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour swore, as he drove off, that if he could find out who the rascal was that had challenged him to fight, he would bring his action against him. So perhaps he has discovered it, and now Mr. Denville finds himself in such an awkward predicament that he is ashamed of making his appearance here.'

"We all looked a little comically at each other," continued Walter, "during this relation. I did indeed think the statement of the case, as here made, rather a lame one, and not given

in very precise and circumstantial terms, so that I was impressed with pretty strong suspicions that, when your defence was heard, we should find that the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour had been at least as much to blame in the affair as his opponent, and I proposed, as soon as dinner was over, to go myself in quest of you. This I did; but finding that you were not at the wharf, I confess I was for some minutes half afraid that you might really be in limbo. Forgive me the suspicion, Sam,—it was scarcely sooner conceived than discarded,—and I still felt perfectly assured that, the truth of the story known, your conduct would be sufficiently vindicated. In fact, I scarcely thought any thing more about the matter till this morning, when calling in Chatham Place, Katherine entertained me with the following history, which I will give you as nearly as I can in her words. You will remember therefore that you are to consider her, not me, as the speaker.

"'Well, Walter,' she began, 'we have had some further investigation of the Hyde Park affair, as you shall hear. Papa and Mamma were so much chagrined at Maurice's relation, that the next morning, anxious to inform themselves further about it, Mr. Fenton was sent for and questioned very closely about Samuel, particularly where he had been the two last

Sundays. Mr. Fenton answered, that owing to a particular circumstance, which happened a fortnight before, and which led him to suspect that Samuel had been out all night,' (Here I blushed again as red as scarlet, knowing to what the examinee alluded; but fortunately Walter had caught up a pencil which lay on the table, and was sketching figures, so that he did not perceive it) 'he had been induced ever since to watch his movements very particularly; and excepting once, when he was out the whole day with you, he could safely say that till last Sunday he had never been absent from the wharf, unless sent out upon business. As to last Sunday, he said that Samuel went out about one o'clock and returned again early in the evening, saying that he had been taking a walk to Kew, which Mr. Fenton verily believes was the real truth. He added that he had then left him at his usual employment in the compting-house, and had not the least reason to suppose him involved in any disagreeable affair.

" 'So far was satisfactory to Papa and Mamma; but it then remained to question Count Maurice a little more closely, and know upon what grounds he had made the assertion that Samuel had gotten into a fray in Hyde Park. A summons was therefore sent to his

countship to appear in court and give evidence; but he was not at that time to be found. One thing however resulted from Mr. Fenton's examination, that Samuel no longer appeared so much a culprit in the eyes of Judge Carberry and his lady.

"'Well, at dinner the count came bustling into the room with more than usual importance, and appearing in transports which almost made him beside himself. In his hand he held a note, which he immediately informed us was from his excellent friend the Earl of Borrowdale, and contained the most polite and pressing invitation possible, to come and visit him at his house in Portman Square. Papa looked a little grave, and began to question him, with more of austerity in his manner than I had almost ever seen him assume, about the fray in which he had said the day before that Sam Danville had been engaged. He desired to know how he had heard of it, from what quarter the particulars he related had been obtained, and how he came to know the name of the gentleman whom, according to his report, Sam had challenged to box with him. In answer to which inquiries, the following entertaining dialogue ensued.

"*Count Maurice.* 'O, dear sir, why the short and long of the story is this. I was,

as I said, going to sport my new tendem for the first time in Hyde Park; and not being as yet much used to my horses, I was not acquainted with their ways; and my leader being a very spirited animal, for you must know he's quite a blood horse, (I could give you his complete pedigree for many generations back, were I not afraid that it might prove *ennuyant* to the ladies....')

"*Judge Carberry.* 'Pshaw! nonsense!—he might have been the son of a dray-horse, for any thing we care about it.'

"*Count Maurice.* 'Well, then, my leader being rather over-spirited from not having been kept in sufficient exercise, (though now I've got my new tendem, he'll be kept in better order, as I intend to sport him every day in the Park...')

"*Judge Carberry.* 'More fool you!—but do go on with your story.'

"*Count Maurice.* 'So I will, my dear sir.—As I said then, he being a little unruly, in turning into the Park I was so unfortunate as to peg a barouche which was just then coming up from the Grosvenor Gate road.'

"*Judge Carberry.* 'To what?'

"*Count Maurice.* 'Peg a barouche, my dear sir.'

"*Judge Carberry.* 'I wish people would use words that one can understand. But go

on;—I suppose you mean that you ran against the carriage.'

"*Count Maurice.* 'Not quite so bad, only against the horses; but whose carriage and horses they were I did not then know. On the box, besides the person driving, was a young lady, who seemed extremely vexed at the accident; and after a little altercation between her and the gentleman, she prevailed with him to get down in order to adjust the metter. And it probably would soon have been amicably settled, but unfortunately at that moment Mr. Denville came up, and very impertinently said he would be my chempion and fight the gentleman; upon which the latter turned away indignantly, and remounting the box, the horses being now disengaged, drove on. I thought from the menners and appearance of the whole party, that they must be people of fashion; and afterwards meeting the carriage again, I was confirmed in my idea, by seeing an Earl's coronet upon it, with the arms in a lozenge, which plainly pointed it out to be a Countess Dowager's. I was now only anxious to know what Countess's it was, when upon inquiry I found it was the Countess Dowager of Borrowdale's;—that her ladyship herself was in the carriage, with her youngest daughter Lady Amenda Clifton, and that the

company on the box were Lady Paulina Clifton her eldest daughter, and the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour her admirer.'

"*Judge Carberry.* 'Pshaw! you need not particularize every one of the party so minutely.'

"*Count Maurice.* 'How can I tell my story without it, sir?'

"*Judge Carberry.* 'Well, well, and so—'

"*Count Maurice.* 'You may easily imagine how much I must be shocked and distressed when I found it was to persons of such high renk that Mr. Denville had behaved with so much disrespect and impertinence; and considering my old friendship with the Earl of Borrowdale, I thought it would be but polite and proper in me to write a note expressive of my very great concern for what had happened, and saying that I would gladly wait upon the ladies, and make my personal apology to them, if I were not apprehensive that it might appear too presuming.' (Here Judge Carberry knit his brows, and appeared to utter an inward Pshaw.) 'Well, this note contains the Earl's answer, in which my conduct through the whole affair is highly complimented; but the strongest resentment is expressed against the fellow who dared to interpose; and as he appeared to be somebody known to me, they beg to be made acquainted with his name and re-

sidence, as the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour is determined, unless he makes a very submissive apology, to bring an action against him for the menacing language he used.'

"*Judge Carberry.* 'He must be a great fool then.'

"*Count Maurice.* 'Dear sir, I cannot see how he can do otherwise, considering the provocation given.'

"*Mrs. Carberry.* 'Mr. Danville did then use very provoking language?'

"*Count Maurice.* 'O, extremely provoking indeed;—just what might be expected from a blecksmith's son.'

"'Here Judge Carberry murmured something to himself which I could not hear, but which, from his looks and manner, I judged not to be expressive of approbation of his son's malignant and illiberal remark.'

"*Mrs. Carberry.* 'Could you not be so good as to favour us with some of the expressions he used?'

"*Count Maurice.* 'Indeed I can't say, madam, that I remember them accurately; and never having been used myself to a blecksmith's lenguage, I should scarcely be able to do them justice in the repetition.'

"'Mamma did here give him such a look!—O heavens! a look of such sovereign con-

tempt as I thought her scarcely capable of giving any body ;—as I would not myself have merited, no, not for any thing which this world could offer:—such a look as spoke volumes, and would, if he had had one spark of the feeling of a man about him, have sunk him instantly into annihilation. Papa at the same time threw his knife and fork indignantly upon the table, with another of his emphatic pshaws! given ten times more emphatically than any of the former ones; and taking out his snuff-box, crammed pinch after pinch into his nose till I really was afraid he would have choked himself. I believe Mamma would have said something as severe as she looked; but turning her eyes to Papa, she saw that he appeared so vexed! regarding his son's reply as excess of rudeness to her,—and so it certainly was,—that she was immediately disarmed, and became anxious only to relieve his chagrin. She therefore, with infinite address, turned the conversation instantly into another channel.

" 'I believe this was a much greater mortification to Count Maurice than any thing she could have said, as he seemed still anxious to recur to the subject, for the sake, probably, of descanting upon the happiness he was to enjoy the next day in his visit to Portman Square. But we all caught the infection, and though not directly

invited to it by Mamma, joined with her in a conspiracy to preclude all possibility of the Borrowdale family being again introduced on the tapis that day. The next day, however, the count was not to be restrained, but would compel us to hear how politely he was received by his new acquaintance as well as by his old friend. Never, he said, was a more charming family; so affable, so much true ease and good-breeding in their manners, that the distance between them and their guests, how great soever it might be, could scarcely be felt. In short, he and they seemed so mutually pleased with each other, that they had given him a general invitation to the house, particularly to the evening parties which they have every Thursday, and he should certainly never omit availing himself of the invitation. As to what concerned Mr. Denville, he said he had undertaken to see him, and endeavour to prevail upon him to make a proper apology, since nothing else could save him from a prosecution; and he intended, as a friend, to call upon him at the wharf for this purpose, though he rather dreaded the thoughts of a walk down Thames-street.

"'Now as to the rest,' remember," said Walter, "I am still speaking in the character of Katherine," 'now as to the rest, a very instructive

and interesting part of this true history is, that the Countess Dowager's Thursday parties are, according to report, very profitable things to her, and half maintain her family. There are always a great many young men at them, and the play is pretty high; while, as not unfrequently happens in parties of a similar nature, though a great deal of money is always lost, nobody ever rises a winner. But among the most unfortunate are the Countess and her daughters; they constantly lose from ten to twenty guineas a night each; and often declare, that if their fortune does not speedily change, they must give up cards entirely, for they cannot support such continued losses;—yet still they play on, and still find money to lose. Several of the set, however, who used to be the most constant attendants at these parties, have somehow or other of late very unaccountably withdrawn from them almost entirely; and my idea is, that wanting new recruits, they are glad to get Maurice to them, knowing him to be the son of a wealthy man, and thinking him a *petit sujet*, whose vanity is so flattered by an acquaintance with persons of rank, that they can make as great a dupe of him as they please. Besides, I have heard that the Lady Cliftons are some of the most notorious quizzers in all London, and they probably expect in Maurice's follies and

vanity a no less prolific subject for their mirth than resource for their purses. Such seems a not-unnatural solution of the present politeness of this family, after having for so many years found that Portman Square and Chatham Place were too remote from each other to admit of any intercourse between them. 'Tis now so directly the reverse, that not only is the latter allowed to travel up to the former, but the Earl even came yesterday to call upon Maurice.

"'The most highly seasoned part of the story is however yet to come, and that has been furnished by uncle Shelburne. Among some of the haunts whither his business carries him, he has learned that the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour did actually, as he menaced, apply to a magistrate for a warrant against Samuel; but on stating his grievances, it appeared that there was no possible ground on which an action could be maintained, and that he would perhaps draw himself into difficulties by persisting in bringing it; so that this idea has of necessity been abandoned. Unless, therefore, Samuel can be frightened into making an apology, which from his character I should not suppose very probable, the affront received by this illustrious personage must remain unredressed. Maurice, however, does not suppose that this piece of secret history is known to us,

and he has been expatiating very eloquently upon the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour's forbearance, that he will not commence his prosecution till every means have been tried in vain to shake the aggressor's contumely, and induce him to humble himself duly before offended rank:—the prosecution is only to be the *dernier ressort.* Nor has the count been sparing of encomiums on his own kindness to Mr. Denville, in interesting himself so warmly to make up this matter; though Samuel's obligation to him, according to his own confession, is not very great; since he says that all he has done has been entirely out of respect to Mrs. Carberry, and because she interests herself so much in whatever concerns him.'

"Such," said Walter, "is the history at full length which I have just been hearing from Katherine: and now, Sam, tell me what is the real truth of the matter, and what has been passing at the recent interview between you and the count?"

"In that you shall be fully satisfied," I replied;—when I proceeded to relate at large my statement of the case, concluding it with a full detail of the conversation I had just had with Maurice. This ended, we had both a hearty laugh at the expense of Maurice and his new friends.

"And now," said Walter, "this matter being sufficiently discussed, there is another topic, Sam, on which I must have some serious conversation with you. You have been accustomed to lecture me; and if the truth is to be confessed, I know that I often deserve to be lectured: but I must now call you to account. Tell me, then, what can be the reason of so strange an alteration in your behaviour as we have all observed for the last fortnight? I came to town expecting to find my old friend such as I had always known him,—though not addicted to any of the levities and follies of youth, yet always cheerful and good humoured,—not seeking dissipation, yet loving rational society,—not thrusting himself obtrusively into company where he was not likely to be welcomed with eagerness and sincerity, yet ready to associate freely where he had reason to suppose he would be welcome;—nay, perhaps, I had even expected to find the empire of these social qualities over his mind more absolute than ever, since he was relieved from the apprehension of being constrained to enter into a situation that was disagreeable to him, and was suffered to follow entirely the path dictated by his inclinations. All this, Sam, I conceived that I had reason to expect; and I was transported with the idea, that among the many de-

lights consequent upon the indulgence shown to my wishes by my excellent father, I might reckon as not one of the least, that those habits of friendship and social intercourse, which had even from my infant years formed one of the principal sources of my happiness, were to meet with no interruption. Speak, then, I conjure you, To what cause am I to attribute the disappointment I experience? How is it that your social feelings seem wholly to have forsaken you?—that instead of mingling with urbanity in society you seem to court seclusion? that your eye no longer beams with that cheerfulness by which it was wont to be illumined, but wears an impression of sadness which implies a mind ill at ease? Speak! believe me I am wounded to the soul in witnessing these things; nor can that sincere and ardent friendship I feel for you be satisfied without knowing the cause."

"O say no more!" I exclaimed; "I cannot bear—" but my voice was too much suffocated to finish the few words I wished to say.

"Yes, I must speak on," said Walter; "I must tell you that your apparent estrangement from a family where you are so much loved, and for whom we had till this moment every reason to think you had an unbounded regard, wounds us deeply. You have had a general invitation to uncle Shelburne's; you have never

been there, excepting the day when I carried you to the house to introduce you almost by force; for, Sam, however you might strive to disguise it, I could not but see that it was with manifest reluctance you accompanied me even on that occasion. Till I came to town you had, I understand, been a constant visitor on a Sunday in Chatham Place; now, you seem studiously to shun the society there, and I can see that my uncle and aunt are both extremely hurt at it. Katherine, too, said to me this morning,— 'What can be the reason that Samuel never comes here now?—I shall forget all my Latin and Greek, if my master neglects me thus. But seriously, Walter,' she continued, 'there is something wholly unaccountable in his having so suddenly absented himself entirely from the house, and I can see that it distresses both Papa and Mamma. There must be some cause for such a change, but what it can be I am utterly at a loss to divine. I wish you would give him a hint upon the subject. If this be not designed, it is really want of the attention due to those who have been such friends to him.' "

" O forbear! forbear!" I exclaimed once more, starting from my seat, and throwing myself into a chair at the further end of the room, hiding my face in my hands, and endeavouring

to repress the tears that were at every moment ready to stream from my eyes.

"No," said Walter, while his voice began to be interrupted too with emotions responsive to mine, "I have ventured to begin upon the subject, and now I must know all. Tell me then, Sam!—for Heaven's sake tell me! what have we done to estrange you thus from us? Is this estrangement really to be ascribed to a cause which I lately mentioned in joke, but on which I now question you most seriously and anxiously? Is it that one of your young companions here has made an impression upon your heart, and in the ardour of a rising passion you cannot tear yourself away from her, even to show the attention which seems due to others? O would to Heaven that you may answer in the affirmative! for then should I be assured that, these first moments of enthusiasm past, the effect would cease, and we should in a very short time see you among us again, sometimes at least, though we could scarcely expect it as frequently as when your heart was free; at any rate, it would be an inexpressible satisfaction to know that your apparent alienation had no other cause than this."

Such a suggestion was enough to rouse me. —"No, Walter, no!" I emphatically ex-

claimed: "I acknowledge my delinquency; there is indeed a powerful cause for it, but not what you suppose.—I do not, I never can love either of these girls: for Heaven's sake name them no more to me!"—and I returned to my seat with sensations very different from those with which I had flown from it My spirit, which I had suffered to be too deeply depressed, was now roused within me; I looked back with shame and regret to the ascendancy which my morbid feelings had been permitted to gain over me; but from that moment I was resolved never more to yield myself up in like manner to their influence. "No, Walter," I repeated once more, "indeed it is not love for one of the Miss Fentons which has occasioned my late misanthropical seclusion. Would to Heaven that it had no other cause! for then the cure would be obvious; and, if I may say so without laying myself open to the imputation of excessive vanity, perhaps not difficult to be obtained."

"Well, then," said Walter, "let me entreat to know the cause, that it may if possible be removed, and that you may be restored to us, such as till lately we had always known you."

"O that it were possible to give you the satisfaction you ask! but the cause must never be revealed, you must be contented to know

that there is nothing in it disgraceful or degrading to me. I do however promise that the effect shall cease; from this moment you shall see me such as I have always been, upon condition only that I am suffered to remain sole master of my secret;—that, with my return to my former habits, my offences may be forgiven and forgotten;—that the heaviest of all punishments may not be inflicted upon me, the being obliged to estrange myself from you again to avoid importunities to which every tie of duty and honour imperiously forbids me to yield."

"You astonish me beyond measure!—Yet as far as concerns myself, I promise faithfully that you shall never be importuned upon the subject by me. Let me but see you yourself again, content to have my friend restored to me, you shall never find me solicitous to know any thing which you wish to withhold from me."

"My generous friend! Yet one thing more I would ask:—Do not, I earnestly entreat, let what has now passed between us ever be known. I thank you,—I most sincerely, most unfeignedly thank you,—for having roused me to this exertion. A few days more and I had probably taken a step which I might have repented all the rest of my life;—a step which might

have laid me open at once to the charge of caprice and ingratitude, though neither would have been the motive by which I was actuated. But 'tis past; I see the folly of which I should have been guilty, and my soul will ever confess, with the deepest gratitude, the obligation it owes to your friendly interposition:—that it is indebted to you, perhaps, for being saved from a very long and severe penitence. One thing only remains to complete the act of friendship you have performed,—that you promise me it shall for ever rest concealed."

"And that I promise most faithfully. Though your words, Sam, are to me most strange and mysterious, yet I have so firm a reliance on your friendship, your honour, and your integrity, that I am sure the latter will have withheld you from any thing disgraceful, and that the concealment you desire does not therefore originate in such a motive, while the former equally assures me that nothing but the most imperious necessity occasions the secret being withheld from me. I therefore willingly acquiesce in what you desire, and solemnly promise, that not a word on the subject shall ever transpire from my lips; and that, if ever it is started again between us, it shall be on your part, not mine."

"O Walter! this is a kindness which I

scarcely know how sufficiently to acknowledge."

"It is not wholly disinterested, however; there is a return which I have to ask for it, and which you must not refuse me. It is, that you will meet uncle and aunt Shelburne, with their whole troop, myself included, in Chatham Place to-morrow, to eat your good mother's turkey. Such an invitation I was charged to bring you, when I mentioned to aunt Carberry my intention of beating up your quarters."

"Yes, bear my grateful acknowledgements to your uncle and aunt for kindness which I feel not to have merited, and say that I accept their invitation with unfeigned pleasure."

I now inquired after Walter's progress in his studies, of which he gave me a very favourable account, and said that he continued his love for painting as strongly as ever; nor did he believe that any thing could diminish it: and after a little more desultory conversation he took his leave. In doing so, he shook me by the hand with a pressure and look of such sincere affection and interest, as spoke the kindness of his feelings towards me even more forcibly than all he had said, and which, while it gave me further assurance of the ardour and sincerity of his friendship, seemed almost to reproach me that towards friendship so unbounded any secrecy should be observed.

CHAPTER XII.

Which includes a longer space of time than any other in the volume, and contains some very interesting matter.—Curiosity, in being partially gratified, only the more eagerly excited.

"WHAT have I done!" I could not help exclaiming to myself aloud, when Walter was gone and I was left entirely to my own undisturbed reflections. Solicited unawares, I had entered into an engagement from which it was impossible now to recede; but what was it I had undertaken to do?—Had I not engaged to mingle again among a society in which I was sure of continually seeing Katherine; and must I not, if I would avoid betraying myself, appear with the same frank, open, unembarrassed manner to which I had been accustomed?—Ah, I felt that I must do so; but I could not forbear asking myself by what charm, by what force of magic this was to be accomplished. Of my weakness in the struggle I had had already but too sensible proofs; and to add to all my other conflicts, I was now to sustain the most cruel anxiety, lest I should inadvertently suffer a word or look to escape which might lead to a suspicion of what it was so important to me to conceal.

Had I been left entirely to myself, I cannot say how long a time might still have elapsed before I could have assumed resolution to enter upon my trial by recommencing my former free and unreserved intercourse in Chatham Place; but taken off my guard, not only had I made an engagement to see Katherine, but to sse her the very next day. O, what heart-rending struggles had I to sustain in preparing myself for this interview!—To have presented myself before her with any ray of hope that she might one day be mine, I would have flown with eagerness half over the globe;—to behold her as a blessing to which I must never aspire, was little better than martyrdom. But I felt nevertheless that it was a martyrdom to which I must submit with all the heroism I could call to my aid, and at the appointed hour I bent my steps towards Chatham Place.

It seemed to me something like a reprieve at the moment of execution to find nobody in the drawing-room when I went in, except Mrs. Carberry. She expressed the utmost satisfaction at seeing me, gently reproached me with having been of late so great a stranger, and said that if I hoped for forgiveness I must not transgress in such a way again. Her nephew Walter, she said, had at first borne the blame of my absence, as it was concluded that I was

engaged with him; but he had been acquitted on his assuring them that he had seen no more of me than they had. I hesitated, stammered, tried to make some excuse, but could find none that would appear tolerably plausible, and was glad to be relieved from the attempt by the entrance of my friend accompanying the whole group of Shelburnes. Here again I had to encounter some gentle reproaches for being so great a stranger; to which I could only answer by twirling my thumbs and looking extremely foolish, taking the first opportunity of escaping from them by drawing Walter to one of the windows and entering into conversation with him upon indifferent subjects, taking care to turn my back to the door, so that I might not see Katherine when she entered. But the moment she appeared, I was deprived of all excuse for thus keeping aloof from the company, since Walter flew to her, his eyes sparkling, and his whole countenance illumined with an expression of so much pleasure, that I could not help interpreting it as a testimony that I was not the only person in the room to whom she was an object of particular interest.

What a moment was this to me! I was seized with such an universal tremor that I was scarcely able to stand, and it was with some difficulty I reached a chair, the room seeming

all the time to turn round with me. But the next moment I was ashamed of my folly; and chance having led me to a seat next to Fanny Shelburne, I began talking to her, but never I believe talked greater nonsense; I am sure I never experienced greater difficulty in finding something to say. I would fain have been animated, but felt myself dull to excess; I never wished so much to play the beau, but I never had the conviction pressed more strongly upon me, that this was not my character: I besides could not forbear reproaching myself with having been absolutely rude to Katherine in not so much as noticing her when she entered: yet no efforts could inspire me with sufficient fortitude even to look her in the face.

Mrs. Carberry perceiving that there was something upon my mind which troubled me exceedingly, and kindly wishing to place me, if possible, by any little attentions she could show me, more at my ease, invited me at dinner to come and sit by her. I was rejoiced at first to accept the invitation, since I was afraid that it might have been my unfortunate lot to be seated by the very person I most wished to avoid: my natural place I felt to be below all the gentlemen; and Katherine, as being at home, would naturally take the lowest place among the

ladies. Yet the moment after I was overwhelmed with the most cruel apprehension lest my strange behaviour had made Mrs. Carberry suspect the truth, and she thought it therefore better both for her daughter and myself to separate us as remotely as possible: under this impression I was for a few moments so wholly lost, that I scarcely knew where I was. Then, angry with myself, I resolved to make a grand effort to alter my behaviour; and after a while I did so far succeed in rallying my spirits and subduing my feelings, that I felt tolerably at my ease, and flattered myself that I performed my part so as to obviate any further suspicion. Count Maurice was not among the company: he was in his own paradise, dining for the first time in his life at the Earl of Borrowdale's.

The ice thus broken, I now imposed it as a law upon myself, to resume my ancient intimacy in Chatham Place, and went there as often as I had been accustomed to do,—at first not without feelings of reluctance,—but these gradually diminished as I daily acquired more fortitude in struggling against the conflict I had to sustain. Not that I ever could bring myself to be upon the same sociable terms with Katherine; I found it absolutely necessary to be as distant to her as decency would permit,—to endeavour by practising a seeming to attain a real

indifference for her. Alas! hard as I found it to put on the semblance of indifference, it was much more difficult, nay it was impossible, to acquire any thing like the reality. One thing I was obliged wholly to wave, and that was our readings together; this was more than I had fortitude to attempt, and it was dropped in silence. Instead of it I adopted the practice, as often as I could, of offering to read the newspaper to Mr. Carberry, since this furnished me with an excuse for keeping aloof from the ladies, and provided me with an occupation which precluded the necessity of endeavouring to join in conversation.

My mind once brought into this state of something like composure, and having learned to sustain itself with fortitude in its severe trial, I rejoiced exceedingly that I had not suffered the immediate shock I experienced on discovering my secret, to hurry me into any of the steps which I had at the moment mediated. It was true that I was now made fully sensible how much, in the repugnance I had testified to going into the church, I dwelt upon the auxiliary motives by which it was inspired rather than on the principal one, and I was not without deep feelings of remorse at having practised a sort of deception in this instance upon my kind and good benefactor. The only

excuse I could make to myself for my imposition was, that it was not a premeditated one; I only deceived him, because I had first deceived myself. But I felt now, that to have returned to the church in the hasty and capricious manner which I had been upon the verge of doing, would have been an aggravation of my fault in quitting it. I could however truly say, that my offence, how great or small soever it might be in the sight of him who alone is competent to decide upon the degree of guilt which attaches to any action, since he alone sees and knows all the motives by which it is actuated, had brought its due portion of punishment along with it. An additional instance this of the great truth, which cannot be too repeatedly impressed upon our minds, how constantly we see, amid the mild and merciful dispensations of Providence, that to a mind not hardened in error, and callous to the suggestions of conscience, every deviation from the strait road brings with it a degree of punishment proportioned to the offence;—and this even though the offence did not proceed from intentional misconduct, but had its origin only in failing to examine sufficiently the motives by which we were influenced, before we acted upon them.

Such was now most truly my case. Had I

duly examined my heart when I first began to take exception to the church, I could not have failed of perceiving that my growing passion for Katherine was the leading motive by which I was influenced; that I could not bear the idea of a total separation from her, lest in my absence I might be forgotten, and another might be stealing into that place in her esteem, which I wished to be reserved for myself alone, and which was best to be maintained by being constantly in the way myself to watch over it. But since this motive would always have been condemned by my better judgement, since I should even have reproved myself very severely if I had supposed it to exist, it never ventured to obtrude itself upon me; and I rested satisfied with the others which did push themselves forward, and which certainly wanted not their due share of force. For even now, when I should truly have rejoiced that the past could be recalled, it was not because I viewed my prospects in the church with other eyes,—it was still as obvious to me as ever that they were far from flattering,—but that, conscious how blind I had been to my real feelings, I had, through that blindness, placed myself in a situation by which my peace of mind was at least stranded for the present, if not wrecked for ever.

Yet, notwithstanding these feelings with regard to my present situation, I rejoiced exceedingly that I had not hastily written the letter to my father, which in the first transports of my soul, upon the conviction of my passion for Katherine, I had thought of writing. To all ideas of love and matrimony I was determined to bid adieu for ever, but I was equally determined that this was a secret which should never be known but to myself. I felt it impossible ever to love any other woman than Katherine, ever to endure the thoughts of an union with any other; but I felt no less that she was removed at such a distance from me, that no thought of her ever being mine must on any consideration be admitted. A stranger then for ever to the delights of conjugal ties,—to filial affection, to ardent friendship, to gratitude to my benefactor, my days were to be devoted. The first was to be pursued in seeking, through a diligent attention to my business, the confidence and favour of those by whom I was employed, which I trusted would ere many years were elapsed place me in a situation that would enable me to render the latter days of my parents easy and affluent:—the last, by making Walter the unceasing object of my care and attention, by watching over him as a guardian spirit, and contributing every

thing in my power towards checking any propensities which might give pain to the best of fathers and of men. And if at last I should be so happy as to see him in every respect such as that excellent father could wish, and could reflect that I had in ever so slight a degree contributed to rendering him so, my heart could never know a purer, a more sincere, or a more refined pleasure.

During the remainder of the winter,—it was that of the end of 1801 and the beginning of 1802, the memorable period when, the preliminaries of peace between the French republic and this country having been signed, the negotiations for the definitive treaty were carrying on at Amiens;—this period, so remarkable in the public annals of the country, produced nothing very remarkable in the private annals of the family with which I was principally connected. Walter pursued his studies in painting during the whole of the winter and the spring with the greatest assiduity, and made a considerable progress in the art; while the good reports given by Mr. Shelburne of his attention to business, and the general regularity of his conduct, communicated the utmost pleasure to the anxious Mr. Armstrong. It was impossible for any young man just coming out into life to be more moderate in the pursuit of plea-

sure than he was. He frequented the theatres but little, seldom going, except when invited to accompany his aunt Shelburne and her daughters, or Mrs. Carberry and Katherine; and if occasionally he was disposed to an evening's amusement there when they were not going, I was his constant companion. He made no acquaintance among idle and dissipated young men, nor seemed ever to wish for any society except that of the families to whom he was introduced by his relations. One only thing with regard to him gave me no slight degree of uneasiness,—but it was a matter known only to myself, as the private confident of all his most secret thoughts;—this was the extreme inflammability, whether real or imaginary it matters little, of his heart. I say *real* or *imaginary*; for, since the object of his ravings was continually changing, was indeed seldom the same for a week together, it might very well be doubted whether a serious passion was felt for any. But I always was aware that an imaginary one was as dangerous, perhaps even more so to him than a real one; because a *tête exaltée* like his was even more likely to commit some folly from the ebullitions of an inflamed imagination, than from any serious attachment of the heart.

However, since notwithstanding these sallies,

notwithstanding the many times he had assured me that he could not live without such or such a woman, I still saw him live and appear in perfect health and spirits, I thought his love could scarcely be very dangerous, and by the time that half a year was expired my anxiety upon this account was somewhat abated. If he could only be constant to one, even in imagination, till he saw another, I thought there was some ground on which to flatter myself that his attachments were too transient to permit of his going any dangerous lengths before his affections were transferred to another, who in her turn would never obtain more than a like momentary influence over him. I could sometimes even not forbear adverting with some degree of astonishment to the different empire which the strange and unaccountable passion we call love exercises over different persons, or forbear to ask myself whether it were possible that the roving sentiment by which my friend was inspired, and which, if his own testimony was to be believed, was scarcely fixed for a week together upon the same object, could really be derived from a like source as that fixed and unalterable one by which my mind was wholly absorbed. The only thing to be said in making this comparison was, that it seemed to be wholly an error to consider the

mind as influenced by the passion; that it was in fact the previous disposition of the mind which determined under what form the passion, which is allowed on all hands to be an universal one, should show itself.

For some time Walter continued to talk in the same heroic strain as at his first coming to town, of his devotion to his lovely cousin Margaret, assuring me that he never could be happy without her; that it was the idea that he was going through his probation for the attainment of her hand, which alone inspired his pencil; and that every stroke he made worthy of his divine art, was to be attributed wholly to the influence of her all-enchanting eyes. Yet all this time the greater part of his evenings were passed in Chatham Place, and nothing could be more devoted than his attentions to Katherine.

What was I to think of this?—Was there any ground for considering his attachment to either cousin as very serious, or very much endangering his playing the fool?—I flattered myself, not. But whatever might be the case with regard to himself, I thought that in the dispositions of either lady there was sufficient security against matters going hastily too far to be recalled. Margaret seemed to me to have so much of the blood of the Armstrongs in

her, that she would probably look higher for a husband than to a painter; and Katherine, I was convinced, had too much good sense, and too devoted a respect and affection for her mother, ever to take any step unsanctioned by her. So far therefore I was easy with regard to her, though I could not for a long time make myself wholly so in another respect. Some movement of jealousy would for awhile steal over my heart as I witnessed my friend's attentions,—and this I now did very frequently;—but I always combated them with the most determined resolution, and endeavoured to the utmost of my power to cherish the feeling, that, hopeless myself ever to possess her, I had rather see her the wife of Walter than of any other person. I thought too that I could discover symptoms of Katherine's heart not being wholly indifferent to her cousin; and if her happiness was to be promoted by an union with him, I endeavoured to persuade myself that I should sincerely rejoice in any event which would make her happy, though I was not permitted to contribute towards rendering her so.

Had my imagination been equally ardent with that of my friend, I know not what would have become of me under the circumstances in which I passed this period of my life; but I

think my reason would have sunk under the conflict, and the remainder of my days would have been passed in a gloomy insanity, lost alike to myself and to the world. But happily for me I was formed by nature with a disposition to combat and subdue my irritable feelings, and the Power which placed me in such a situation of trial mercifully supported me through it.

I grew daily so much more and more in favour with Mr. Carberry, from the steadiness with which I pursued my business, and from the respect which I always endeavoured to show him, and to which he was undoubtedly entitled, both on account of the real good qualities he possessed, and of the uniform kindness with which I was treated by him, that he would scarcely ever suffer me to spend an evening any where but at his house: if I did not come spontaneously, he would often send for me. How many evenings have I passed with him, he and I seated apart from the rest of the company, at a small table at one corner of the fire, immersed in our study of the newspapers, while I was alternately reading and listening to all he had to say upon the various articles of intelligence they contained! particularly to his animadversions upon the manner in which the

negotiations at Amiens were carried on, to his censures of some of the proceedings and commendations of others, and above all to his recommendations of measures by which the general pacification might be exceedingly expedited, and more solid as well as more advantageous terms procured for all parties!

"Samuel," he would say, "now is the time for consummating a sincere and permanent friendship between two countries which have been for so many ages hostile to each other. What a stake are both sides playing for!—I think, if I were employed in the negotiation, I would contrive to have every thing so arranged as that it should be impossible for any future subject of quarrel to be found."

"Indeed, sir!—Yet prone as mankind is to find subjects of dispute, and nations perhaps even more than individuals, I scarcely conceive the feasibility of rendering the thing impossible to them."

"True, we are all, I say it with deep regret, a great deal too much disposed to find subjects of difference and dispute; yet, Samuel, you see—(and here the poker was thrust into the fire)—I wish I had the map at hand, I could then make it as clear to you as daylight."

"Shall I get you the map, sir?"

"No; no, don't give yourself that trouble, I believe I can make myself sufficiently understood without it.—You see, I would have the boundaries of every state so distinctly laid down, that it should be impossible for any doubt to arise concerning the line they were intended to take.—You understand me?"

"Oh, extremely well, sir."

"As for example:—every country is more or less intersected with rivers, chains of mountains, and other natural barriers of the like kind. Here now, we'll say, runs the Danube, there go the Pyrenees, there the Appenines. (And here the poker travelled in different directions about the hearth, delineating in its progress a very accurate map of the whole continent of Europe.) Now I would have these taken as the fundamental principle of partition, and where they fail, some artificial boundary might be formed to complete the line: a canal we will suppose might be cut, which would also be of infinite utility in facilitating the means of communication all over the continent, through the inland navigations by this means created."

"But don't you think, sir, that disputes might then arise concerning the right of navigation, or on the subject of defraying the ex-

penses necessarily attendant upon keeping these canals in proper order?"

"That might be easily obviated. The right of navigation should be open to every body belonging to either country of which the canal was the boundary, only upon the payment of certain tolls; which tolls should be applied to keeping the canals in repair, and also to the maintenance of special courts of judicature to be stationed at certain distances along the canal, and to which all disputes relative to it should be submitted, without any appeal from their decision."

"Not even to the sword."

"Oh, the sword would be put completely out of the question: and the boundaries thus definitively settled, which all sides should be solemnly sworn never to transgress, the whole continent of Europe must in future become as one great family, and live in uninterrupted amity among themselves and with our island. And this, or some similar plan equally efficacious, is what, if I were in the House of Commons, I would respectfully propose to their consideration as the basis of the negotiation;—I would say, Mr. Speaker, I consider it as the imperious duty of every member of society..."

But, reader, I think it will be enough to

have given thee the good merchant's project,—thou wilt perhaps readily dispense with hearing the speech made by him to the honourable House in support of it. At least, judging of thee by myself, I may fairly suppose so; since I must honestly confess that, excellent as the speech was, replete as it was with profound reasoning and able argument, I did grow a little weary of it;—nay, I must confess that I had even given a wide yawn or two before the orator arrived at the end, and I received his mandate to proceed in reading the paper.

As to the project itself, courteous reader, if in perusing it thou shouldst be induced to remark, that if Mr. Carberry was not a better calculator as a coal-merchant than as a politician, it may be considered as matter of astonishment how he ever made so large a fortune by his business;—if this suggestion should present itself to thy mind, I answer, that his theories were confined entirely to matters of politics and state œconomy, they were never suffered to interfere with any thing relating to his mercantile concerns: the latter were carried on upon certain long established maxims, the beneficial effects of which had been sanctioned by successive years and tens of years of experience, and they flourished accordingly. It was only because he found these mercantile

principles so uncontradictorily good as to resist speculation, that he was obliged to seek out other subjects to speculate upon. For, being naturally of a speculative turn, it was necessary that his speculations should be directed somewhere: if a certain compass had not been allowed for them to play in, his mind might have been overpowered with the fermentation. It was therefore that he indulged in political speculations; and since they never went beyond his own fireside, they did no harm to any body.

The greatest annoyance they occasioned even to me was, that often while I have sat listening to them, I have been tantalized by seeing Walter with Mrs. Carberry and Katherine, at another table, amusing themselves in a thousand little interesting, refined, and sociable ways, such as could only be thought of or enjoyed by excellent and polished minds. At such moments I could not help feeling what pleasure I should have derived from being a partaker in similar amusements; and it seemed somewhat hard that I was obliged not only to forgo the joining in them, but even, in order to have a sufficient pretence for so doing, to seek out a mode of passing the time, which, taken in the abstract, was certainly any thing rather than agreeable and amusing to me.

However, my occupation was rendered more palatable by the reflection that I was in some measure employed in the service of Katherine: by reading the newspaper, I was sparing her many an hour of *ennui*; since, if I had not done it, the task must have devolved upon her. From the time that this suggestion first presented itself, the task wore a different aspect, and I considered the idea of becoming reader to our good merchant, as a very happy inspiration. Often, however, when at my return home after an evening passed in this way, there appeared greater reason than ever to suppose Katherine and Walter destined in the great book of fate to each other, I found additional reason to regret that I had so hastily abandoned the church. Not only had I, by doing so, thrown myself into a situation in which emotions of jealousy never wholly to be repelled were incessantly awakened, but I also reflected that, as a clergyman, the care of educating the children of persons so dear might have been consigned to me; and next to possessing Katherine herself, I thought that no happiness could be equal to that of assisting in training up and forming the minds of her children. But, as a coal-merchant, it seemed as if this was a happiness to which I could never aspire. I had not then any idea, though it was what

subsequently happened to me, that, without absolutely quitting my post in the compting-house, my time might be divided between my occupations there, and communicating to another the classical attainments in which I had been educated.

Of the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour and his prosecution, it will be easily supposed, I never heard any thing more; but Maurice, notwithstanding that he had not been able to carry his point of engaging me to make a submissive apology for my impertinent interference with this illustrious member of the Whip Club, was still cherished and caressed by the noble family of Borrowdale. He soon became an almost daily visitor there, and was scarcely ever in his father's house, even during the time that it continued to be his home, except for the hours which he chose to devote to sleep,—and these were commonly from about five or six o'clock in the morning till about two in the afternoon. Having now however taken his degree at Cambridge, so that he was not to reside there any more, but was to remain stationary in London, he soon found that Chatham Place was no proper residence for him. It had always been a leading object of his ambition to insinuate himself into the society of the *grand-monde*, and this desire had

burned with tenfold ardour in his bosom since it had been partially attained by the new acquaintance he had made: yet he saw plainly, that though the family of Borrowdale, subduing their old objections to the place of his residence, had been so condescending as to admit him as a visitor, with others the being an inhabitant of so horribly commercial a part of the town would prove an insuperable bar to their maintaining any intercourse with him.

After much speculation, then, upon the means of procuring himself an establishment more suited to the ends he had in view, he thought of availing himself for this purpose of his father's foible, and his talents were just sufficient to enable him to see how that might best be turned to his own advantage. With this view, he persuaded his father that a certain knowledge of the law, if not essentially necessary, would be extremely advantageous to him when he should be in parliament, and he therefore suggested the being admitted as a student at one of the Inns of Court. By this means the time which must necessarily elapse before he could come into parliament, would be profitably employed in the acquisition of knowledge which would enable him to make a better figure when there. This, as it humoured his hobby, appeared so reasonable to Mr. Carberry,

that he entered immediately with eagerness into the idea; the count was accordingly admitted at Lincoln's Inn, and settled, through the liberality of his father, in very handsome chambers, with an allowance of 500*l*. a year.

Here was a very great point gained; for, being now emancipated from the noxious vapours of the City, the bucks of rank discovered that it was possible to associate with him; and since, from the freedom with which he spent his money, his acquaintance was very convenient to them, he was soon among the most distinguished of the Bond-street dashers. When not dining with his friends in Portman Square, he was commonly invited by the Earl of Borrowdale, or the Honourable Mr. Molesworth Seymour, or some other honourable personage of the same stamp, perhaps by some half dozen such honourable personages, to join a party to dine at some expensive tavern, or *restaurateur's*, where they were served at a guinea a head, and where the claret was not spared; while, they having unfortunately forgotten to bring money with them, and he being always forward to show off his wealth, the honour of discharging the reckoning commonly devolved upon him; and since persons of rank cannot be so vulgar as to have good memories, they commonly forgot the obligation, so that the

money was never reimbursed. At the same time the Countess Dowager of Borrowdale and the Lady Cliftons commonly did him the honour, at least twice in the week, of disencumbering him of fifteen or twenty guineas at their evening card parties, — constantly asserting, however, that they rose losers themselves.

Liberal as the count's allowance was, it will be obvious that it must be wholly inadequate to the support of expenses like these; and the consequence was, that he was often obliged to have recourse to his father for an additional *douceur*. At length however these applications became so frequent, that instead of contributing to preserve the *douceur* which was to be wished between a father and his son, they became rather subjects of *aigreur*; the one asserting that with such a permanent income no one ought ever to be behind hand in the world and in want of assistance; the other as strenuously maintaining that his allowance was by no means equal to supporting him with credit in the rank of life to which he was destined. It was in vain for the merchant to urge, that he did not educate his son as a gentleman of independent fortune, only that he might waste his time and money among idle lords and ladies; his object was to see him useful to his country, to see him shining as one of its legis-

lators and governors; the company he desired him to keep, was that of men of talents, of celebrated parliamentary orators, under whom he might imbibe such ideas as would lead him in time to follow their steps. Maurice replied, that at the Earl of Borrowdale's he had frequently met members of parliament, and that the Earl himself was the proprietor of two boroughs, for one of which his lordship had assured him that he would bring him in on the first vacancy, at a lower price than he would any other person; so that, if the acquaintance did now lead him into some expense, it would be a saving in the end. Though Mr. Carberry was too good an arithmetician to have admitted of the justice of this calculation if he had weighed it well, yet here his foible was touched, and the prospect of his son's coming into parliament, being by this means facilitated, outweighed every other consideration. The altercation therefore commonly ended in his satisfying the demands made upon him, however immoderate; and many a heavy debt which the count's fashionable friends had assisted him in incurring, was liquidated in solid payments, on the eventual hope of saving not a tenth part of the sum, at an uncertain, perhaps a very distant, period.

One other occurrence of this winter must

not be passed over. Some mistake having occurred in the bill of a Mrs. Northington, who bought her coals at our wharf, I was dispatched to her house in Grosvenor Street, as envoy extraordinary for arranging it. My astonishment may easily be conjectured, when, on being ushered into this lady's presence, I beheld the very person whose attention to Walter at the Shakespeare Gallery had so much excited my curiosity. I was struck beyond measure, and for a few moments could scarcely speak, while I dare say I looked extremely awkward and confused. I however soon recovered myself, and the matter being properly explained was immediately settled: but even in a circumstance so trifling there was an elegance, a grace, an ease, in her whole deportment, which was enchanting. Yet at the same time it was evident, from the transaction which had brought me thither, that though possessing a superior mind, and doubtless a person of fashion, she neverthel ss paid the proper attention to her domestic concerns.

But what struck me more than all was, that over the chimney-piece hung a miniature picture so exactly resembling a face which had been familiar to me even from my earliest infancy, that of the excellent Mr. Armstrong, that I could not possibly suppose it intended

for any body else. That is to say, it was Mr. Armstrong younger than I had ever known him, but still the same countenance, and almost what Walter's was at that moment, only with the precise difference that there was between his and his father's,—that whereas the expression of Mr. Armstrong's was chiefly extreme mildness and benignity, Walter's had in it more of fire and animation. Here was indeed an extensive field of speculation opened to me. It was plain that this lady was by some chance or other extremely interested in Mr. Armstrong, else why his picture hanging up in her room? or, if it was not his, how extraordinary was it that there should be somebody so strongly resembling him, in whom she did take an interest! However this might be, I could not now doubt that it was Walter's resemblance to this picture which occasioned her to be so much struck at seeing him, and fixed her attention so much more closely upon him all the time she stayed, than on any other object in the room.

It was impossible, now that I was become acquainted with this lady's name, not to be anxious to learn more of her history; but all the particulars I could obtain, were, that she was of a good family in Shropshire, and had married about twenty years before a gentleman of very large fortune in that county. Even from

the first of her marriage she had led a very uncomfortable life with him, and at the expiration of ten years he had fairly told her, that he was tired of her and could not live with her any longer. It was impossible for him, he said, to remain constant to one woman, he must have variety, and he was therefore determined to separate himself from her; nor must she flatter herself that he could be induced by any means to recall a determination which he assured her was not made upon the start of the moment, but was the result of long and mature deliberation. This was a heart-rending stroke to her; she had borne with the most exemplary patience and fortitude, a great deal of unworthy treatment, desirous of all things to avert the present stroke, which she had long feared he meditated, and which she thought not creditable either to him or to herself. But all remonstrances against it were vain; he was inexorable, being resolved no longer to be restrained by her presence from pursuing his inclinations. On the score of fortune, however, he said she should have no cause of complaint, and he made a very handsome settlement upon her, by a deed which he put it out of his own power to revoke: on this she established herself in the house in Grosvenor Street, where I had seen her, and there she

had lived ever since. She had a young lady living with her, who was professedly not her daughter, nor did any one know whether she was even a relation. Nothing more was known concerning her, than that she was called by the name of Elliott, that Mrs. Northington had given her an exceedingly good education, and had recently brought her out into public as her companion: this I immediately concluded to be the young lady whom I had seen with her at the Shakespeare Gallery. In these particulars, I found nothing to satisfy me upon the point on which I principally wanted satisfaction, since they in no way accounted for her having Mr. Armstrong's picture hanging in her room.

What added to the singularity of this matter was, that not many days after, Walter told me he had been the evening before at a private dance with his aunt Shelburne and his cousins, where he had seen a lady, a Miss Elliott,—he had indeed danced several dances with her,—with whom he was desperately disposed to be even more in love than with any of his cousins. She was not particularly handsome, but a charming girl in her manners, and far the best dancer in the room. The name of Elliott immediately caught my attention, and I inquired what Miss Elliott she was; whether she belonged

to any of the great families of that name. To this Walter replied, that indeed he did not know who her parents were:—"in fact," he said, "to own the truth, there seems something about her parentage, which had better not be investigated too minutely. She lives with a Mrs. Northington, who is what the world calls a *widow bewitched,* and the scandalous chronicle will have it that poor Louisa is the offspring of a little indiscretion of this lady's since she was separated from her husband. Be this as it may, she passes only for an *élève* and *protégée* of Mrs. Northington's; but the great pains this lady has taken with her education, strengthens the belief that she is more nearly connected with her." I could not forbear inquiring whether Mrs. Northington was of the party with her *protégée,* anxious to know whether she had been introduced to and taken any notice of Walter; but he replied that she was not there, she had been prevented coming by indisposition. Here however seemed a sort of opening by which I might be enabled hereafter to learn something more about her; and having inquired the name of the family at whose house the dance was, it was registered faithfully in my memory. For some days Walter did nothing but rave about Louisa Elliott, and then she seemed nearly forgotten.

CHAPTER XIII.

A journey to the continent undertaken.—Good advice given upon the occasion.—A project for a fashionable wedding.—Melancholy adieu at parting.—Stage-coach conversation.—A new discovery in medical science.

THE definitive treaty of peace between France and England being at length, after much delay and discussion, adjusted and signed, it is fresh in the memory of every one how great was the throng of travellers from this side of the water, which the renewal of the long suspended intercourse between the two countries carried to visit the French capital. Walter, whose mind was ever alive to any new and striking impression, soon caught the infection, and became ardently desirous of improving himself in the pursuit to which his powers had been devoted, by going for a while to study amidst the immense treasures of art collected in the Louvre at Paris. The idea was no sooner adopted, than it was conveyed by letter to his father, accompanied with an assurance, that if indulged in this wish he would be doubly diligent at his return; and he trusted that the improvement gained by an intimate

acquaintance with these *chef-d'œuvres* would be such as amply to repay the expense incurred by the journey.

Mr. Armstrong was far from objecting to his son's request, and only hesitated in giving his immediate assent to it, from not choosing that he should go alone, yet feeling that it was difficult to find him an eligible companion. Many *pros* and *cons* passed upon this subject between the three brothers-in-law, Armstrong, Shelburne, and Carberry, which ended in some pretty broad hints being given from the second to the third, that it might possibly be in his power to obviate the difficulty, by offering for the purpose a certain clerk who had been for some months in his service. The good merchant was not backward to take the hints; and theoffer being made, Mr. Armstrong replied that it was the thing of all others he wished, though he should have been scrupulous of asking it: being offered, he should accept it with pleasure and gratitude. The news was immediately communicated to me by Mr. Carberry, and I cannot say with how much delight I heard of the intended treat. A visit to the French capital, all the various sources of entertainment and instruction which it afforded taken into consideration, was one of the richest mental banquets in which any

one could partake, and I feasted upon it in idea with the ardour and relish, of a true *gourmand.*

It was, however, determined that our expedition should not take place till the summer and fine weather were perfectly set in, and July was the time fixed for our departure: our destined stay at Paris was to be two months complete. In the interval Walter went down to make a visit to his father; when he received from his own mouth all the advice which this good man thought necessary to be given to a son for his conduct amid the varied and novel scenes into which he was to be introduced. Walter was profuse in his expressions of gratitude for the indulgence shown him, and assurances of the pains he would take that it might be justified by the advantages gained. My father was elated beyond measure on learning that I was to visit foreign parts with the young rector. This was an honour, to which in the most sanguine moments of his aërial buildings he had never dared to elevate his thoughts: the tidings, therefore, when imparted, were only doubly transporting; nor could he forbear instantly sitting down to communicate his feelings upon an event so unlooked for, in the following letter to me.

'My dear dear Sam,

'This is with our kind love to you; and to be sure ever since you have been in Mr. Carberry's service all the news we have heard of you has been the most welcomest possible to the heart of your poor old father and mother, and Mr. Armstrong he have often said, Robert, your son seems going on so well that I think you can no longer regret his having given up the church, which I always answered, "Thank your honour very kindly for all favours, and to be sure I should be very ungrateful, and very undeserving of all your kindness, and Mr. and Mrs. Carberry's, and so would Sam too, if he could wish that he should be any where but where he is, seeing that he might have gone all the world over before he'd have found any body else that would have been half so kind and so good to him as you and Mr. and Mrs. Carberry have been. And as to the church, right is right, whether a man's a clergyman or a coal-merchant; and though to my thinking 'tis a very fine thing to be a clergyman, yet I hope 'tis not presumption to believe that God will bless those as do their duty, out of the church as well as in; which I hope your honour won't think it no disrespect to clergymen that I say this, for nobody can have a greater respect for clergymen than I have, and God forbid that I should

call them parsons, and such kind of names as some folks do!"—Which then Mr. Armstrong smiled, and said that he was quite of my way of thinking; that a man might have just as much favour in the sight of God without being a clergyman, if he did but perform his duty in that state of life to which it had pleased God to call him.—And so indeed the Scriptures tells us, St. James, chapter first, verse 25th: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work; this man shall be blessed in his deed."—Which you know, Sam, this says nothing about a clergyman, for the word is whoso, and that means that it may apply to any body; therefore, to my thinking, 'tis all the same as to God's blessing us when we behave well, whether a man's a clergyman or a coal-merchant.

'And to be sure I have a great right to think so, seeing that you have done your duty so well, that it pleases God to send you one of the greatest pieces of good luck that ever could befall any body; for indeed, my dear Sam, I think 'tis the best piece of news we ever had in our life that you are going to see foreign parts with young Mr. Walter, which that is an honour that my poor old Hannah and I we never could so much as have dreamt

of; and that makes it so much the more over-joying: and what's more than all is, that you are to have so much pleasure without a farthing of expense; for Mr. Carberry he is so kind as to say that he will furnish money for your expenses, which, if he had not insisted upon it, Mr. Armstrong says that he should have paid for you; seeing that travelling costs a great deal of money, and seeing foreign parts is very expensive as well as a great pleasure.

'My dear Sam, I have heard a great deal about the French being all atheists, and not worshipping God as it is the duty of every man to do, whether French or English; which I never believed it possible that this could be true, because it is so natural, as one may say, to worship God, seeing that we know we can none of us make a tree grow, or make the corn ripen, or make the sun shine, or make it rain; and who is it that does all this?—Why God, for certain; and every body sees that it must be God, and can't be any body else; and therefore it seems so natural to worship God and pray to him, and give him thanks for all the good things that he bestows upon us;—and the more, because 'tis all out of his own gracious goodness that he bestows them, and tries to make us happy; for 'tis not the least to do himself good, because, how should

that be, unless for the pleasure he takes in seeing his creatures pleased and enjoying themselves? And seeing all this, I can't believe as there can be any people such fools as not to worship him and pray to him; and if they don't pray to him just exact the same as we do, that's because it pleases him that one should pray one way, and one another; else, he who's so good would never let us go on doing what is displeasing to him, seeing that he always teaches us what is right, if we wasn't so perverse that sometimes we won't be put right— and so to my thinking, 'tis quite wrong for us to say that the French is all atheists and don't worship God at all, because they says different prayers from ours. Which so I dare say Mr. Armstrong thinks; else, he is such a good man that I am sure he would never let young Mr. Walter go where nobody thinks about God; and for that reason I have no fears at all about your going, for what's fitting for young Mr. Walter is fitting for you; and therefore, Sam, your mother and I heartily wish you a good journey, and a good voyage by sea, and a safe return, and a great deal of pleasure. And to be sure, it must be a very great pleasure indeed to see foreign parts, and I should like very much to see them myself, on account of all the curious things they contain; only that

you know, Sam, I can't leave my work for so long a time, and be at so great an expense; no more would you be able neither, but for the favour of Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Carberry; for you know, as the saying is, if the mill stops the corn won't grind. But foreign parts must be very curious for to see; and if it wasn't for losing time and making a hand of money, your poor old father, Sam, would like of all things to go with you.

'Sam, I suppose you will see a great many fine gentlemen and ladies in foreign parts; for though we call 'em all *mounseers*, yet people as knows 'em, says there's as good-looking men and as fine ladies there as here; and I was a-thinking that if one of the ladies should happen to take a liking to you,—as you don't seem to think you shall ever fancy one of the Miss Fentons,—so if some fine lady in foreign parts should happen to take a liking to you, which I am told that they fancy a comely Englishman very much, and in the right on't too to my thinking,—so that 'tisn't the most unlikeliest thing in the world, and in foreign parts they might not perhaps think so much of your being only a blacksmith's son; which indeed for that matter, how should they know any thing at all there about whose son you are? and if she should chance to be worth a good deal of

money, as well as being a fine lady, why that would be quite a good thing for you, and there'd be the matter settled at once, and you'd be made a gentleman without any more to do; and this I think is no such bad notion. So I would advise you, Sam, to look well about yo and dress yourself smart, which to be sure shall not grudge any money you may spend f that purpose; for you know that whatever n old dame Hannah and I can earn 'tis all f you, and to be spent whatever way is most f your advantage.

'And if such good fortune as this shou come to pass, then indeed I should have a gre right to bless the day when first young M Walter thought about going to foreign par and taking you with him; which that I sh always do, whether you bring a wife hon with you or not. For when first Mr. Arr strong asked me promiscuously whether should be afraid of your going upon the se which I answered, No, please his Honour, f God is every where; and if he pleases, we ca be just as safe at sea as on shore, so I shou never think of terrifying myself for nothing and then he told me, that if I would consent you were to go to foreign parts, which I think I never had such happiness as to hear it, ever since the day when you was born, Sam, and

nobody can deny that that was the happiest day of my life. So at first I really could hardly believe it, for I thought Mr. Armstrong must be joking; but when he assured me that it was quite true, I was fit to be wild for joy. Well, I said, that was an honour for Sam which I never could have been so presuming as to think of, and to be sure I thought there never was so great favour shown before, by gentlefolks such as he and all his good family, to such folks as we: which then he said he was sure young Mr. Walter couldn't have had any body go with him that he would have liked half so well: which so young Mr. Walter says himself, for he has been so good as to come and see old Hannah and I several times since he have been down at Langham, and always talking about you, and saying something that's kind and agreeable, which you know he always was so affable and good-natured, all the same as if we had been quite his equals. So wishing you once more a good journey and a safe return, and hoping you will write and tell us all about the curious things you see, and whether foreign parts be at all like England, and above all Wiltshire; and whether they have grass and corn, and cattle and trees, as we have, and good beer and ale, and plum-pudding and

pork and sausages, and such things. So no more at present from your

'Ever-loving father and mother,

'ROBERT and HANNAH DANVILLE.'

"Well, here we are, old Steady," says Walter, as we proceeded towards the Brighton coach, which we were to join at the Elephant and Castle on the Kennington road; for it had been determined that we were to take our passage from Brighton to Dieppe:—"Well, here we are, old Steady," said he, "and from this moment I resign myself wholly to your guidance; I do not stir a step but what is sanctioned by your superior wisdom and discretion; for such I look upon it was dear Papa's intention in providing you as my companion. I do not however mean, in making these observations, to insinuate that he has not consulted my inclinations in so doing; on the contrary, I can say with the utmost truth and sincerity, that he never could have provided me any companion half so much to my taste. And so we are going to leave all the pretty English girls behind us, and *faire les doux yeux aux jolies Parisiennes.* Shall we find any of the bewitching sex on the other side of the water half so bewitching as those we leave behind us?—I really am inclined to doubt it. Margaret, Fanny, Katherine! ye

three divinities! ye perfect graces!—can all Paris furnish your parallels?—Ah surely not! —What think you of the matter, Sam?—You look so grave and solemn, that one would think you were really leaving your heart behind you."

It was indeed most true that I did feel a little solemn. I thought I was rejoiced at the idea of getting wholly out of the way of Katherine; but at the moment of departure, something like a painful feeling came over me in reflecting upon the long interval that was now to elapse before it would be possible for me to see her again. Besides, the adieus in Chatham Place had made a truly melancholy impression upon my mind. The family had removed to New Lodge early in June; but business had brought Mr. and Mrs. Carberry to town for a few days at the time of our departure, and chance led to my having a tête-à-tête of near two hours with Mrs. Carberry on the evening before we set out. I had for some time apprehended her not to be in good health, and that evening I thought her looking particularly ill. She seemed extremely glad of an opportunity of having some private conversation with me, as being anxious to talk over, with some one in whom she could place confidence, a source of uneasiness which secretly preyed upon her mind.

"Samuel," she said, "it is impossible for me to see without many a secret pang, the way in which Maurice is going on; and I feel it the more severely, because poor Mr. Carberry seems at present wholly insensible to the consequences which must necessarily attend upon such a career. To others his follies may appear only ridiculous, to me they appear in a very different light; I see in them a source of ruin to himself and his whole family, if a strong rein be not put upon them without delay. These friends, in the society of whom his foolish vanity feels so flattered, have obtained such an entire ascendancy over him, that there is no folly into which he cannot be led by them, and the extravagancies in which he is by these means involved almost exceed belief. As yet, however, his father can see nothing in all this but the wildness of youth, which must be suffered a while to take its course, and will in time correct itself:—his son's wild oats, he says, must be sown, and that done, he may be never the worse man in the end. Yet, Samuel, as a mother, I cannot help thinking what may be the fate of my poor babes, if he should be suffered to continue in such courses:—if it were only idle expenses of horses, carriages, and things of the like kind,—though these swallow up large sums of money,—yet Mr. Carberry's

fortune is ample, and large expenses in this way might be supported without its being essentially injured; but you have no idea how much he has lost at the card-table, since the commencement of this intimacy; and this is an expense which, if continued, no fortune can stand. Mr. Carberry's apparent insensibility to this reflection affects me more acutely than I can express: would that I could find any means by which to rouse him to a due sense of it!—He is not wanting in understanding in most of the concerns of life; but his weakness with regard to this young man has been, even from his infancy, great indeed, nor ever was more painfully displayed than at this moment.

"Would you believe it! Maurice has taken it into his head that he has insinuated himself so completely into the good graces of Lady Amanda Clifton, that he has but to put the question to her, and she would be his immediately. It is this idea which has occasioned our coming now to town; for besides that he has brought forward fresh demands upon his father to a considerable amount for debts already incurred, he wants to have a permanent establishment settled upon him, such as may be adequate to supporting her ladyship in a manner suitable to her rank, and he would then make his proposals without delay. Most sorry am I,

to say, that Mr. Carberry seems far from thinking this idea as ridiculous as it appears to me; his own foible, his only foible, is sô much flattered by the prospect of aggrandizement which such an alliance holds out to his son,—by the prospect of its strengthening his interest with the Borrowdale family, so as to put the question of his being brought into parliament by them out of all doubt,—that he is too much blinded to contemplate it under the point of view in which, to a person of his real good sense, it must otherwise appear. He does not therefore show any opposition to the match; he only wishes to be assured of the probability of his son's success, before he makes the arrangements desired; while Maurice contends for the arrangements being made before he puts the question in direct terms. On this subject they have already had one pretty warm altercation, and they are now closeted together again talking the matter over, which I own I am afraid Maurice will carry in his own way.

"Samuel, I have been led to speak to you thus freely, because I know that I can confide in your discretion; while your connection with the family is such, that it may hereafter be in your power to serve them essentially in various ways, if the unpleasant aspect under which I am now unfortunately compelled to consider

their future prospects, should ever be realized. You will besides, from the nature of your employment, be enabled to know with some degree of certainty, whether the affairs are ever taking that adverse turn which would render a great change in our present mode of living necessary. Alas! those who are most concerned to know these things are often the last to be made acquainted with them; and I shudder at the thought that this may one day be my case. On you, therefore, I would fain rely to advertise me betimes, if ever you see reason to confirm my apprehensions. I am afraid,—yes, Samuel, 'tis with the utmost pain I am compelled to own that I am afraid Mr. Carberry's weakness with regard to his son will never know any bounds;—and that Maurice's follies should know any is much more hopeless. Mingled with my feelings of pleasure at the great amusement and instruction which I trust you will receive from the journey you are about to undertake, are some feelings of regret at the length of your absence, since it seems to me the loss of a friend whom I may find truly valuable. And yet when I consider your absence as long, I am perhaps unreasonable: three or four months are soon past,—gone before we are aware of it,—and to look back on such a portion of time seems nothing: looking

forward, there are occasions on which it seems much, particularly to one deeply impressed with the extreme uncertainty of all human events. We daily see persons apparently in the highest health, snatched off so suddenly, so unexpectedly to all around them, that the stroke seems scarcely credible; and can any one among us say that such may not be his or her destined lot? Ruin may come upon us almost as unexpectedly. What new follies Maurice may be guilty of in four months, who can say? and in your absence there will be no one in whom I can confide to make me early acquainted with the fate I may expect. Of one thing I have no doubt, that Mr. Carberry will conceive himself bound in honour to fulfil all his son's engagements, how foolish soever may be the ways in which he has involved himself; nor will I pretend to determine, whether for this he ought to be commended or condemned: a mother's partiality might perhaps lead her to arraign what by an impartial observer would be considered only as strict justice."

In strains such as these did this excellent woman pour out her heart to me during the whole time that we passed together; while I said what I thought might fairly be urged to console her. The principal topic on which I dwelt was, my hopes, and they were sincere, not merely as-

sumed as something consoling to urge, while at the same time I had no confidence myself in the truth of what I advanced, that Mr. Carberry was not so wholly insensible to the alarming conduct of his son, as she seemed to apprehend. I knew by accident, that on one occasion, when Maurice's demands for money, and that in no inconsiderable sums, had been very rapidly repeated, there had been a pretty smart altercation between the father and son, in which the former had said some very severe things in the way of reproof to the latter. The manner in which I had come by this knowledge, however, I did not conceive to be such as authorized me to communicate to Mrs. Carberry all that I knew upon the subject; though I did conceive myself authorized to say so far, as that I thought there was reason to hope Mr. Carberry's blindness not altogether as great as she seemed to apprehend. But what struck me the most forcibly and the most painfully on this occasion was, the manner in which she expressed herself on the uncertainty of human life. These expressions, combined with the look of ill health which I had previously thought I observed, gave me very cruel and alarming apprehensions, that she felt herself far from being in a good state of health; and hence her alarms with respect to the future prospects of her family made a deeper and more

painful impression upon her mind. It was, however, some satisfaction to observe, that this conversation appeared to have afforded her considerable relief, since her mind was manifestly less oppressed when we parted, than when first she opened the subject. She felt consoled in the assurance, that in case any thing material should happen with regard to the matter which had so affectingly awakened her maternal solicitudes, they were now confided to one who could enter duly into them, and, as circumstances should occur, either strengthen or confute them. Or, that in case any thing should happen to herself, the stroke would not now come wholly unexpected upon all her friends; that one at least would be somewhat prepared to meet it, and be the better enabled to sustain it with fortitude, and console those to whom a similar advantage had not been extended.

Yet, with all these things upon my mind, it will not appear extraordinary that some kind of cloud hung over it, and that I felt a considerable alloy to the pleasure I had once proposed to myself in our projected excursion. It was impossible that I could without very painful feelings leave behind me one for whom I had such an unbounded respect and value, under the influence of such cruel uneasiness of mind; more especially since I felt, that though there

was reason to hope Mrs. Carberry's alarms greater than were necessary, yet that they were not by any means without foundation: and thus affected, it was not surprising that my manner should be such as to call forth the observation which has been recorded as having fallen from Walter. I was determined however to repress this gloom as much as possible, and at least to assume the semblance of cheerfulness, nor suffer the good humoured hilarity of my fellow traveller to be interrupted by seeing me in a temper of mind so much the reverse.

Our company in the coach consisted, besides ourselves, of two very smart ladies, (who, by the quantity of artillery they were carrying with them in band-boxes, hat-boxes, and other packages, seemed to have deep designs on the hearts of the Brighton beaux,) and two other gentlemen; so that we were the full complement of passengers, which the inscription on the outside of the vehicle announced that the proprietor's license permitted him to carry within.

The party of six whom accident had thus jumbled together, had scarcely completed the first ceremony always performed upon such occasions, that of taking an accurate survey of each other, when one of our gentlemen pulled out a very elegant snuff-box, and, presenting it

first to the ladies and afterwards to the gentlemen, politely offered the nose of any amateur to become a partaker in the regale which he so richly bestowed upon his own. This was as politely declined by the whole company; when he observed, "Ah, I perceive none of you gentlemen are medical practitioners, else my snuff would not have met such a general refusal."

"How so, sir?" said Walter. "I did not know that it was necessary for all medical men to take snuff."

"Necessary!—Sir, 'tis impossible that they should do without it:—we all take immense quantities in the dissecting-room."

"What is the reason of your doing so?"—asked our other gentleman.

"My dear sir, to prevent infection, to be sure."

"Are you very liable, then, to infection in the dissecting-room?"

"Most undoubtedly."

"May I ask of what nature?"

"Of what nature, sir? Oh, every body knows that a dissecting-room is a very infectious place."

"There is probably, however, some particular kind of infection to which it is more especially liable?"

"Oh, most assuredly."

"And that is?"

"That is—that is—that is—O my dear sir, every body knows that—knows that—we are extremely apt to catch putrid fevers."

"And whence comes that?"

"Why, from the stench of the putrid bodies, to be sure."

"And you find that taking snuff prevents the infection?"

"Very effectually."

"Those that take snuff never have putrid fevers."

"Never."

"Indeed!—that is very extraordinary."

"But very true, I can assure you."

"I do not in the least doubt it.—But give me leave then to suggest whether, since it is so good a preventative against the infection, it might not be equally efficacious in curing the disease when caught?"

"Egad, I never thought of that; but undoubtedly it must be so."

"A few grains, twenty or thirty perhaps, mixed up in a little water, and taken three or four times in a day, I should think, must be all that is requisite to effect a complete cure; and nothing can be more simple than such a remedy."

"Egad, I'm exceedingly obliged to you, sir, for the hint, and I'll be sure and try it the very first opportunity that offers."

"Nay, I do not see why it should be confined to putrid fevers;—why it might not be administered in fevers of every kind."

"Indeed, I am of that opinion."

"And in general, in all infectious disorders; —small-pox, for instance."

"No doubt of its efficacy.—But, if I am not too intrusive, you, sir, I should think, must be a medical practitioner?"

"I beg pardon, sir,—but mine was only speculation drawn from analogy; I thought that what would prevent, must necessarily cure a disorder."

"You only speculate then in medicine as an amateur?"

"Not so, neither:—I follow my own business, and trouble myself little about other matters."

"And your business is, sir?—if I may ask it without a pearing too presuming."

"No presumption, sir,—a farmer, at your service."

"Bless me, who could have thought it!—You take in the Medical Journal, then, perhaps?"

"I take in no Journal at all."

"I write sometimes in that; an excellent publication, upon my soul.—You might be worse off, I can tell you, than in taking that in. —Very much obliged to you, sir, for your hint about snuff;—think I shall write a paper about it in the next number."

"Surely that were impolitic. Would it not be better, when you have made a few experiments and have got some half dozen wonderful cures which you could cite, to sell the powders, without a hint at the nature of them, as a newly discovered specific against putrid fevers? Then a patent for it might be obtained, and you might soon make an immense fortune in a very easy way."

"Egad, an excellent thought, and I'm exceedingly obliged to you for it, sir.—But you'll be so good as not to blab, and I'm ready to make you any acknowledgement you please for the hint, on your engaging never to set up against me as a rival."

"Oh, you need not fear my doing that: and as to the credit of the discovery, and the profit to be derived from it, you are perfectly welcome to both. I merely threw out the hint as a suggestion dictated by common sense; but I have no wish whatever to give myself any trouble about prosecuting the idea and bringing it to perfection."

"Indeed I am most excessively obliged to you; and when I go back to London, I don't know but I may get somebody into our hospital with a putrid fever, in hopes of bringing the infection among the patients, that I may set about my experiment: then, when I've made a fortune and got a country-house, I shall be very happy, sir, to see you there, if you'll be so good as to favour me with your address, that I may know where to find you."

"I am much obliged to you, sir, but I seldom go from home.—And indeed, when your reputation is fully established, your residence will be so well known, that, though you may not be able to find me out, I shall very readily find you, and, if I feel myself inclined when I am in London, can pop in some day as I stroll that way, and eat a mutton chop with you."

"That will be kind indeed;—and we'll have a bottle of our best wine, to drink a glass of thanks to you as the founder of our fortune."

I was sorry that the general attention was here called away to a dead horse which lay by the road side, and which our living cavalry were not very willing to pass; so that this ingenious conversation was broken in upon, and never after resumed. I would have given something to hear our *soi-disant* farmer, who I was well convinced was just as much one as myself,

play off the little doctor for some time longer; for never was I more amused than with the conceited credulity of the one, and the perfect gravity and appearance of serious belief in what he said, with which it was played upon by the other. He was a man of very superior talents, and entertained us exceedingly in various ways during the journey, but it was impossible to learn who he was. On our arrival at Brighton we all took our leave of each other, to go after our respective affairs; the little doctor renewing his warm expressions of gratitude for the hint he had received; and I expressing a very sincere wish that some chance might bring us together again, for that I had seldom in the like number of hours been equally entertained and instructed. He expressed himself as highly flattered with what I said, and assured me that he should be no less happy in such a chance: indeed I verily believe that we should upon the spot have reciprocally communicated our names, and agreed that we would not trust to chance alone for bringing us together again, but that he did not like, considering how much he had been playing upon the follies of our companion, to make himself known. As to Walter, his principal occupation during the journey had been to make himself agreeable to the ladies.

CHAPTER XIV.

L'homme propose, et Dieu dispose.—*A hint on the subject of Port wine.—Projects disconcerted, and how.—New characters appear upon the stage.—Efforts in surgery.—Conversations in a sick-room.*

It is not every body who sets off on a tour to the continent that ultimately accomplishes all he proposed when he engaged in the undertaking: indeed this is perhaps the lot of very few. But the progress made by different travellers varies exceedingly. One accomplishes all his principal objects, and leaves only a few minor ones unachieved;—another does not get through above half of what he planned; another, not above a third; another, not above a quarter. It stands recorded at Calais, among the annals of the *aubergistes* in that celebrated town, that two young Englishmen, but I can assure thee, courteous reader, that these were not Walter Armstrong and Samuel Danville, once embarked at Dover, and landed at Calais on their way to make the tour of Europe. Arrived at their *auberge*, they called immediately for tea, and toast and butter. The tea was brought. Those who are acquainted with the tea at Calais will immediately guess what sort of tea it was; those who are

not, may form a tolerable idea of it by what they may have tasted at many a Ram, a Lamb, a Stág, or a White Hart in England:—but as to toast and butter, that not being an article of *gourmandise* altogether as common in France as in England, the *garçons* and *filles* of the *auberge*, as well as *Monsieur l'hôte* and *Madame l'hôtesse*, were totally at a loss to guess what they could mean. This, it must be owned, was a great trial of temper to travellers; but it was borne with great magnanimity by our *deux Anglais*, for they only sent every soul in the *auberge* to the ——.

The next thing summoned into their presence was a bottle of Port wine; but, O terrible to relate! even worse than the matter of the toast and butter, no such thing was to be had all over the town. Here, however, we cannot omit to remark, that the good *aubergistes* must have been *bien bêtes* to confess this fact. They must probably have had plenty of their own *vin-de-table* in the cellar; and upon such a foundation an English *aubergiste* with the assistance of a little honest malt spirit, which by his sovereign license and authority had taken the name and bore the rank of true Cognac brandy,—by the assistance of a little of this choice liquor, and some juice of black currants, or extract of red beet, he would in two minutes

have manufactured as excellent a bottle of right Oporto, five years old, as ever appeared upon an English table. But the French *aubergistes*, not being Englishmen, were unfortunately not aware that right old Oporto was so easily to be procured; so that, through their ignorance, their guests were deprived of an article so essential to the comfort of all true-born Britons.

And here, if I were as much inclined to digressing and episodizing as a well known sentimental traveller of our country, I might take occasion to write a whole chapter upon the vast superiority of Englishmen over Frenchmen,—a thing of which all my countrymen are well aware, though all are not blessed with the same happy opportunity of exemplifying it that falls to my lot at this moment. For though there are a hundred thousand ways in which it might be exemplified, I know of none in which it shines more conspicuously than in this facility possessed by our innkeepers of accommodating their guests at all times, and under all circumstances, with whatever they please to call for. It is not every writer, however, who is furnished with the occasion of noticing these things in the course of his writings; and I might therefore well be excused, considering the opportunity now offered me, if I were to devote a score or two of pages to a digression upon this subject.

But I am not a digressor; consequently I shall content myself with making this distant allusion to a well-known fact, and then return to the *history of myself and my friend*; first concluding in one short period the continental adventures of the travellers which we have seen in so distressing a situation at Calais.

Monsieur l'hôte and *Madame l'hôtesse* then, being only *Français*, and not having the talents and presence of mind of those who have devoted themselves to a similar profession in our own country, *bêtement* confessed that Port wine was a thing not to be procured all over Calais, and it was therefore impossible that their guests should be accommodated with it. What then was to be done?—Nothing, it will be obvious, remained to two travellers placed in so cruel a situation but to d— the whole country, as not containing any thing worth an Englishman's concerning himself about, and to sail back to Dover the next day. This was what they did; and so ended their continental tour.

Another party did not even get so far on an excursion they had planned; for, arriving at Dover, whence they could see the French coast, they did not like the looks of it, so never even took the trouble of crossing the Straits.

How much was accomplished by Mr. Walter Armstrong and Mr. Samuel Danville, of the plans which they had arranged for themselves when they set out from London in July 1802, on a visit to the French republic, will appear in the sequel.

On our arrival at Brighton, we found that it was likely to be four or five days before any vessel would sail for France; so that nothing remained for us, but to employ the time we must necessarily be detained there in examining the town, and exploring the country about. In one of our rambles we had bent our course to the village of Rottingdean, between three and four miles east of the town; where visiting the churchyard, we found among the gravestones one erected to a man who had lost his life a few years before by his horse taking fright as he was riding out, when running with him to the edge of the cliff, it sprang forward, and both man and horse were, as might be expected, instantly killed with the fall. We were returning towards Brighton, talking of this adventure, when, just about the very spot where it was reported to have happened, we were alarmed by seeing the horse of a lady almost close to us, who was riding with a servant in attendance behind her, suddenly start and set off, running

exactly in the direction to have gone to the edge of the cliff, and endangered her sharing the same fate.

Alarmed beyond measure, we both flew to her assistance, and caught hold of the horse just time enough to turn him aside, and prevent the accident we dreaded, though not so as to prevent the lady's being thrown from her seat. But Walter, by a *tour d'adresse* scarcely comprehensible, contrived so to break her fall, that she came to the ground without receiving any other injury than what was occasioned by the fright into which she had been thrown. The lady safe, the horse was no longer an object of our solicitude; and breaking away from us, he was quietly abandoned to his own inventions, when he set off in pursuit of the other horse and servant:—for the servant's horse, on seeing the lady's set off, had done the same, and was already at a considerable distance; though, having taken a direction opposite to the cliff, no other alarm was excited on his rider's account excepting the apprehension of his being thrown, which it was impossible by any efforts of ours to prevent. I was indeed rendered incapable of giving further assistance to any body: in fact, instead of giving it, I stood in need of it myself. In seizing hold of the horse's bridle, with an eagerness proportioned to the appre-

hension I was under, I received so severe a kick from the animal, that in a few moments I was wholly unable to stand. The blood was streaming from the wound: I was fearful, besides, that the bone was broken; and seeing the lady safe, I sunk upon the ground, scarcely aware, till assured of her safety, of the agony I was in myself. The attention of both Walter and the lady was now turned entirely to me; but incapable as I was of moving, the only thing to be done was, to tie my leg up in a handkerchief, to prevent as much as possible the effusion of blood, and for me to lie there while my friend and the rescued fair walked on to Brighton to procure me the necessary assistance.

They had not proceeded very far on their walk, when they were met by a chariot in which was a gentleman, who stopped on seeing the lady, to inquire how she came in that situation, walking with a stranger; on hearing the story, he took both into the chariot, and drove full speed to the town. There depositing the lady at her lodgings, he and Walter went in search of a surgeon, whom he brought in his carriage as expeditiously as possible to the spot where I lay. They were in due time followed by a party of pedestrians, ordered thither by the surgeon; who hearing the nature of my accident, said that I had better not be brought

home in a carriage. The men were therefore charged with a *brancard*, on which was spread a featherbed: upon this I was extended, and thus carried in solemn procession to my bed at Brighton, Walter attending by my side, and the surgeon and gentleman returning in the carriage, that the former might prepare the bed for my reception. Notwithstanding the agony I was in, I could not forbear smiling, when, on looking my operator in the face, I immediately recognised our fellow traveller in the coach, who had amused me so much by his playing on the folly of the little snuff-taking doctor; while the gravity and serious face with which he had at first begun to question me, relaxed into a sympathetic smile on our eyes meeting; though nothing more than this short and mute though very expressive dialogue passed at the moment, upon a subject which it was evident was immediately present to the thoughts of both.

When the surgeon came to examine my leg, he found that the bone was not injured; that I had received only a flesh wound, but so severe a one that it must of necessity be some time before I could have the use of my limb again. Nothing therefore remained but to compose my mind, as well as I could, to bear an evil for which there was no remedy, and to submit

patiently to the regimen of bed and water-gruel which it was necessary I should observe. Here, then, was an insurmountable barrier to our proceeding, for some time, at least, upon our proposed tour. I would fain have persuaded Walter to request his father to provide him some other companion, with whom, putting me out of the question, his journey might be prosecuted; but this was no sooner suggested than he positively interdicted its being mentioned a second time. He should think himself the most unfeeling of mortals, he said, if he could leave me in such a situation merely to seek his own gratification; a thing which, besides, it would be impossible for him under such circumstances to find; he could never have any enjoyment in the journey himself, while reflecting that he had left me behind upon a sick-bed.

It was necessary, now, that our respective parents and friends should be made acquainted with our situation, and the catastrophe which had put a partial stop, at least, to our projected excursion. Walter wrote immediately to Langham to inform the good rector of it, and to desire him to impart the news to my father; he wrote also to Mr. Carberry, who, next to our parents, was the most nearly interested in what had happened. An answer was received

as soon as possible from Mr. Armstrong, expressing, in the warmest and kindest manner, his extreme concern and anxiety on my account, and regret that his own state of health precluded the possibility of his coming to us. My father, he said, was extremely affected at hearing of my accident, and very naturally had determined to set out immediately for Brighton to see and attend upon me himself; it was even not impossible that he might be there as soon as the letter. He further requested that I might have every comfort possible, with regard to lodging, attendance, or any other species of accommodation that could contribute to alleviating the irksomeness of my confinement, and to promoting my more speedy recovery, without any consideration of the expense, no part of which he insisted should fall upon me or my father. The same thing was repeated by Mr. Carberry, with the kindest expressions possible towards me, both on the part of himself and his amiable wife. He added, that they might very likely see me in my sick-room, since they had projected an excursion to the sea on Mrs. Carberry's account: he was sorry to say that she had appeared for some time far from well, and it was hoped that travelling and sea air might be of service to her. My accident had determined their route, which before had been doubtful, and they should soon

set out to explore the Sussex coast. By bending their course that way they hoped a double object would be obtained, in the benefit that would accrue to Mrs. Carberry's health, and in the satisfaction they should receive from seeing me themselves, and being assured from ocular demonstration that I was in as favourable a way as possible.

And that indeed I was from the very first: I never had any fever, at least so as to occasion a moment's apprehension for me; nor did the wound ever wear an unfavourable aspect, though the flesh was so much lacerated, that time must necessarily be required for its being completely healed. I had, besides, an excellent medical attendant in the person of my stage-coach companion, whose name I found to be Weyland. He was not a surgeon of the place: indeed, having had a good fortune left him, he had for two years wholly retired from practice; he had only now come down to Brighton for a while from friendship to a surgeon there, to attend for him professionally during three or four weeks that he was obliged to be absent on particular business. I amused him not a little, when, at the first examination I underwent, I asked him drily whether he did not think that a plaster of snuff applied outwardly might be as efficacious in curing a wound, as a dose of it

taken inwardly in curing a fever? He replied, that he would readily make the experiment if it was my wish, and, in case of its succeeding, would impart the discovery to his stage-coach pupil, as a further means of promoting his reputation and practice. I found Mr. Weyland, as I conceived him to be at our first interview, a man of a very superior mind, and no less superior attainments; and I know not whether I derived more advantage from his professional skill, than I did entertainment and instruction from his general conversation. In the course of his attendance we more than once amused ourselves with talking over the day we had passed together in the coach, and the folly of our little priggish companion.

Mr. Armstrong's letter, which announced my father's intention of coming, did indeed only precede the latter's arrival by about two hours. He was quite overcome at first seeing me, and wept like a child in talking over the danger I had been in. "Never," he said, "could he sufficiently thank the goodness of God that had preserved me from it; and if I was suffering, I had done such a good action to a fellow-creature, that he could never doubt that God would reward me for it, seeing that, according to the Scriptures, kindness to a fellow-creature was the most acceptablest of all things in the

sight of God; for you know, Sam, when our blessed Saviour tells his disciples about the last judgement, why what's the actions that God above all things rewards?—Doing good to our fellow-creatures, to be sure. And what's the things that he punishes above all others?—Being unkind and hard-hearted towards them. And therefore, Sam, if you had lost your life, —though I verily believe my poor heart would have been broke by it,—which, however, I should always have prayed to God earnestly that he would enable me to bear such a trial as a Christian ought,—yet if it had pleased God that I should have sunk under it; notwithstanding, it would have been the greatest comfort to me in my dying moments to think that my son's life had been lost in doing a good action, and that he had shown such a noble courage to do what was right, and never thought of danger to himself when it was to save another."

I must confess that my father's arrival was an inexpressible source of comfort to me. It was impossible for any thing to exceed the kind attention shown me by Walter; he never left my bedside, not even at night, from the moment of my accident till his place was resigned to my father: but though in some points of view this attention was of infinite comfort, and was inexpres-

sibly gratifying to me, in others it was a source of the greatest trouble and anxiety. His health I knew was not such as to support for any time, without injury to himself, such confinement and fatigue, and this gave me great uneasiness. Besides, I really felt hurt at seeing the order of things so reversed as that he should become my servant, when naturally I ought rather to have been his. But after my father arrived, there could be no occasion for this extreme attention to continue, and he was induced to relax in it. At first he would only take a walk of an hour or two; but afterwards he would be absent for many hours together, assuring me at his return that he found so much amusement in a scene so novel to him, that he could almost rejoice at having been detained there, however he might lament the cause to which he owed it. I wished him very much to have gone to Langham for the time which must elapse before we could proceed; but he still said that he could not bear the thoughts of leaving me, though under the care of one so interested for me as a parent.

The fair whom we had rescued we soon learned was a Miss Bridport, and the gentleman who had taken Walter and herself into his carriage was an uncle of the same name, with whom she lived. The latter we were

informed was a man of good fortune, and the lady was entirely dependent upon him, she having been left by her parents, who had both been dead some years, wholly destitute. Mr. Bridport appeared a man of about sixty, and his niece a woman of seven or eight and twenty; he seemed extremely fond of her, and was unbounded in his acknowledgements of the service we had rendered her; he should never forget, he said, that he probably owed the life of one so dear to him to our heroism. For a short time he acted in conformity with these professions, coming to our lodgings himself two or three times in the day to inquire after me, and entreating very earnestly, that, if there was any thing in which he could be of use to us, we would command his services, or that we would send to him for any thing we wanted which it was in his power to supply. But after five or six days these assiduities gradually declined; his inquiries were less frequently made, while the servant was sent with them instead of his coming himself; and in less than a fortnight they wholly ceased,—he seemed to think nothing more about me.

After the first emotions excited in my poor father by my situation had somewhat subsided, he began to be himself again, and soon recurred to his old ideas and speculations equally

with regard to my physical and moral situation. On the former subject he inquired with extreme anxiety, and looks of very profound sagacity, into my surgeon's professional treatment of me. He would fain have inspected the wound immediately, that he might judge how it was going on, and expatiated diffusely upon the mode of treatment he should have pursued if he had fortunately been in the way when the accident happened. I however desired to be excused any exhibition of it, excepting in the surgeon's presence, alleging that, even allowing the superiority of my father's judgement, yet as things were now circumstanced, any interference on his part would be highly improper. The surgeon was at present answerable for the remedies he had applied, but his responsibility would be at an end the moment that another person interfered. If any ground of dissatisfaction with him should appear, then indeed there would be sufficient reason for taking me out of his hands; but as long as I was going on well, it appeared a manifest injustice to deviate from his directions.

"O no, Sam, to be sure," my good father replied, "as you have another doctor I should never think of subscribing; but I wanted to know what kind of salve he was using, be-

cause I dare say you remember how I cured Tom Wilson, the gardener at Mr. Armstrong's, when he got his nose cut right across with a spade by his boy Ned, as they was digging together; which I always thought it was mighty ungain of the lad, and poor Tom for certain had a lucky escape that he hadn't one of his eyes dug out, instead of only his nose cut. So when he comes promiscuously to me to ask what was best to be done, I gives him some of that there salve as my dame makes, which you know it was a receipt that old Ruth Morden gave her when she was a-learning midwifery of her; and old Ruth said that she had never given it to nobody before; but she had such a respect for Hannah, and it was such a good salve, that she had no right not to let somebody have the receipt; else when she was dead and gone who should be able to make it? and that to be sure would be a great loss, because she never knowed it to fail, and many's the cut and burn and other misfortunes she have cured by it,—above all, kibed heels. So she gives the receipt to Hannah out of respect for her, and you know Hannah has always kept a good stock of the salve by her; and 'tis boxes and boxes of it we've sold; and not only christians, but even poor dumb creatures too, many's the one that has been the better for it. Well, so

I put a bit of this to Tom Wilson's nose, and it was soon well; and if any thing should happen, Sam, that you don't think your leg gets well as fast as Tom Wilson's nose did, why then there could be no harm in trying it; so I've brought a box with me, that it might be ready if the doctor should like to use it. Though as to your doctors, they're always too proud to think any thing's good that they don't subscribe themselves, and that isn't made up by your apothecaries; and they make game of old women's nostrums as they call 'em; but to my thinking there's as many folks cured in a year in such simple ways, as by all their outlandish drugs. Nay for that matter, how do I know that they are outlandish? for I shouldn't be surprised if they're just such simple things as I subscribe, only they give 'em hard names to look wise, and that people may think they can't be had any where but out of their shops. But as to my Hannah's salve, there's nothing in it that any body ever need to go to a shop for, neither apothecary's nor any other, for 'tis only simples pounded together with a little good kidney suet of mutton to bind 'em, and make 'em spread, and God knows that never can do harm to nobody."

I saw that my good father had a terrible

inclination to make an experiment, whether Ruth Morden's salve would not be as efficacious in the cure of a kick from a horse, as in that of a cut from a spade; but as I never could get my inclinations to coincide with his, it was perfectly decided that my doctor should proceed according to his own discretion with his remedies from the apothecary's shop. I have always been fully satisfied, that if those who devote their lives to the study of medicine and surgery, cannot obtain all the knowledge which might be desirable for their own reputations and the advantage of their patients; yet when we put ourselves under their care we give ourselves every fair chance of recovery; and if they cannot succeed in removing our ailments, there is no very good reason to suppose that we should have a better chance in the hands of one who has never studied the matter at all. While I listened, therefore, with a patient and respectful attention to the good Doctor Danville's eloquent disquisitions upon the subject, I never could be induced to consent to his manual interference with my wound, excepting under the direction of my regular-bred attendant. He did not attempt to deny that I was going on as favourably as possible, but could not refrain often from hinting that he

thought the *guérison* would have been much more rapid with no other application than his own specific.

When his rhetoric was exhausted on this topic, there was a variety of others on which it was exercised, as he sat attending by my bed-side, or by my sofa when I was allowed to quit my bed. The first Sunday after his arrival he appeared in such a spruce suit of black, that I really thought it must have been entirely new, and that, in the full confidence of Mr. Armstrong's death, he had purchased his mourning ready for the occasion; but not being then called into use, it had been reserved for some grand occurrence, and was now brought out to make a figure among the beaux and belles at this fashionable watering-place. "Why, father," I said, "those smart clothes can never have been the produce of John Dynes's magazine!—I do think you have at last afforded yourself a new coat, and I am extremely glad to see it."

"No, no, Sam, not quite so fast.—Sure enough 'tis not one of John Dynes's coats, but 'tis not a new one neither. You know I was obliged to walk over to Salisbury to get to the stage, when I thought about coming here, which to be sure I don't think I should have got into a stage at all, but have walked all the way, if I had not been in such a hurry to see

you. And for that matter, the higgler would have carried me over to Salisbury in his cart for nothing, if I could only have waited two or three hours; which that I could not do; for the moment I heard what an accident it had pleased God should befall my poor boy, I wasn't easy till I was on the way to see him. But it would have been all the same if I had waited for the higgler, for 'twas two or three hours after I got to Salisbury before the coach was ready to set off. So I went to walk promiscuously about the town, and there was the organ playing in the cathedral, and very fine it was, to be sure, and the lads they sung very well; though, to my thinking, I've had some in my school that sung quite as well, more particularly Will Jefferies, who went to be singing-man at one of the colleges at Cambridge; there never was a lad had a better voice than he, or took more pains, which Mr. Armstrong was always quite delighted to hear him, and he knows something about music, and is quite a good judge. Many's the time he has said to me, "Robert," says he, "that lad does you great credit indeed, and you may depend upon it that he'll make a capital singer:" and so I suppose he is now, and he's often sent for to other places to sing, and gets a great deal of money, which that is a great pleasure both to me and Mr.

Armstrong, because it was he as recommended Will to Cambridge. Well, so when the organ had done playing, I went and walked about to other parts of the town; so then it came into my mind that when I was there at the assizes, about that estate of Mr. Godfrey's, and took you with me, Sam, and you was so delighted; then I bought a very good coat of a man no great way from the cathedral; and I thought within myself, that my Sunday coat was but a shabby one, and had got quite rusty, though it was as good a one when I bought it as ever came out of John Dynes's shop. So I goes in promiscuously, and asks if they had ever a good second-hand black coat as would fit me; which the man said I was quite lucky, for he'd just got a whole suit of black, that he thought, by the look, would fit as well as if they was made for me, and they hadn't been upon the gentleman's back that they were made for, half a dozen times; which he was a master linen-draper, and always wore quite good clothes, and he died not above two or three weeks after they was made. So I tries on the clothes; and the man was right, for they could not fit me better if they had been made on purpose. So I makes no more to do, but strikes a bargain directly; for I thought it would be right to appear a little decent while I was staying

here with you, because, mayhap I should see more good company than down there at my own house at Langham."

"Indeed, father, you seem to have made an excellent purchase. But I hope you don't think of leaving your good old Hannah in the lurch, and trying to win the hearts of some of the Brighton belles. You've often told me that when you were a young man you were a great spark among the lasses, and there was nobody in the village half so great a favourite with them."

"Aye, why to be sure, Sam, the lasses did use to like me a little; but then you know I'm growing old, and don't think of these kind of things any more. I've had my day, and now 'tis your turn; and for that matter, I'm fit to believe you're quite as likely to be a favourite among 'em as ever your old father was. As to our village lasses, however, I don't think any thing about them, though I dare say there is not one but would be proud enough if you had a liking to her. But that would not be the thing at all; for what would be the good of living among such genteel company as Mr. and Mrs. Carberry, and Mr. and Mrs. Shelburne, and such like people, if you was only to have a village lass at last? Who knows what may fall out? for if you don't fancy the

Miss Fentons, which God forbid that I should wish you to marry any body you don't like, for the lucre of gain, since that is what the Scriptures do not approve; but there's Miss Peggy and Miss Fanny, Mr. Shelburne's daughters, which I suppose he is quite a rich man, and will give them handsome fortunes, and when young people is much together, they often takes likings nobody knows how; and nobody can talk better than you, Sam, to be agreeable to young ladies; so that I don't see why 'tis impossible that either of them should take a liking to you. Then there's Miss Kitty, too, Mrs. Carberry's daughter by her first husband, poor man! Mr. Walter says she is a very nice young lady indeed, which I have not seen her since she was quite a child; but 'tis my thought that Mr. Walter himself have got a bit of a liking for her; and if so, why he has a much better right to it than you have, and it would be quite wrong for you ever to think about any lady that he had a liking to.—Sam, what's the matter?—You seem to shake so, I'm afraid your leg pains you sadly;—perhaps it is not laid right, could not I move it so as to make it easier?"

"No, I thank you, father, my leg is quite easy."

"What's the matter then? for you don't seem so well as you was just now."

"'Tis nothing but that my head aches a little."—I might have said, my heart.

"Mayhap I talk too much?"

"I think you do, father.—I don't mean in general, but just now it rather seems to fatigue me."—Alas! he had inadvertently touched a tender string; and I was glad on any terms, even by saying what I feared had the appearance of being unkind and wanting in the respect due to a parent, to put an end to a conversation which called up sensations in my mind that occasioned me far more suffering than any pain I experienced from my wound.

Another time, when Mr. Bridport had been to inquire after me, my father took the opportunity of expatiating a little upon certain consequences which in his ever active mind he had been arranging as the not improbable result of this affair. "Mr. Walter," he said, "had told him that Miss Bridport was a very nice lady, quite handsome, such a nice fair skin, and such sweet blue eyes; and besides, he says," proceeded my father, "that, poor thing! she is so grieved about your having met with such an accident all along of her; 'tis so hard, she thinks, that when she herself got

away quite safe, you should have been so hurt, for if any body was to be hurt it ought to have been her rather than you; and if you had not gone on quite well, so that there should have been any fear for your life, she verily believes she should have gone crazy. And they say that Mr. Bridport is a very rich man, and folks think as his niece will have all his money: suppose, therefore, that out of sorrow for the misfortune she has occasioned, she should take a liking to you; for you know, Sam, that many's the good time ladies have fell in love with gentlemen for such things; which to be sure nobody could render a greater service than you and Mr. Walter did to her. But she must think the most about you, because of all the pain and confinement it has occasioned you; so that nobody could be surprised if she should wish to pay you for saving her life, by bestowing herself and all her money upon you: and then if things should fall out so, why to my thinking your accident, instead of being unlucky, would be one of the luckiest things that ever happened to you."

"Dear father, how many wives do you intend I should have? for you have already provided me with a dozen at least."

"No, no, Sam, I don't mean you should have all these ladies; one wife's enough for

one man, and more than's good, too, sometimes, though I have no right to say that, considering what a good wife I have had, which thank God for it, and every body should speak as they find, and pray God you may have as good a one! But you know 'tis best to have one's choice, and then if one won't another will; and I can never suppose you'd be such a fool, if such nice ladies were willing, not to take one of them."

"But what then are the French ladies to do, father? for you seemed to think that I should stand an equally good chance among them."

"Well, if you like them better, Sam, I'd have you please yourself. But folks tell me that the French ladies are pretty enough, to be sure, but not so rich as the English ones; and though every body must wish to have a pretty wife, yet money, too, is a good thing, for nobody can be gentlefolks without it: but then to marry for money only, where people does not like each other, that is quite another thing. However, if Miss Bridport should take a liking to you, why that would be better, it's my thought, than the French ladies. Indeed for that matter it does not seem so certain, Sam, that you'll ever be able to go among them, for, to my thinking, your leg's a long time getting well, much longer than Tom Wilson's nose,

notwithstanding all your doctors, and their poultices, and their good morrows. I wish I had been here at first; for now, as you say, I don't see that you could tell the doctor not to come any more, especially as both Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Carberry is so kind as to desire that he should come; and, what's more, stand to the expense of it. But then 'tis a great pity their money should be wasted; so I was thinking whether I could not show the salve to the doctor, and then perhaps he'd know it was a good thing, and be quite glad to have it used."

In these kind of conversations, or in reading to me, did my father beguile the tedious hours that he sat watching by my bedside; nor for a fortnight after his arrival could I prevail upon him ever to leave me even to take a walk. I say he beguiled the tedious hours; for though sometimes in his projects for providing me with an agreeable matrimonial alliance he introduced discussions which were rather tormenting, yet on the whole I could not but be amused with them, particularly with the perfect confidence he seemed to feel that I had nothing to do but make my choice among the ladies to whom I was known; that there was none who would not be extremely flattered with the offer of my hand. Alas! I felt all the time that there was but one woman in the world to whom I could

endure the thoughts of offering it; and not only had I reason to apprehend, that if offered to her it might be rejected with scorn, but I felt no less that I could never be guilty of such presumption as to make the offer.

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